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Into the Seam: The Architecture of Boundary

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by Erik Leahy

A Terminal Project
Presented to the Faculty of
The College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Architecture
Major: Architecture

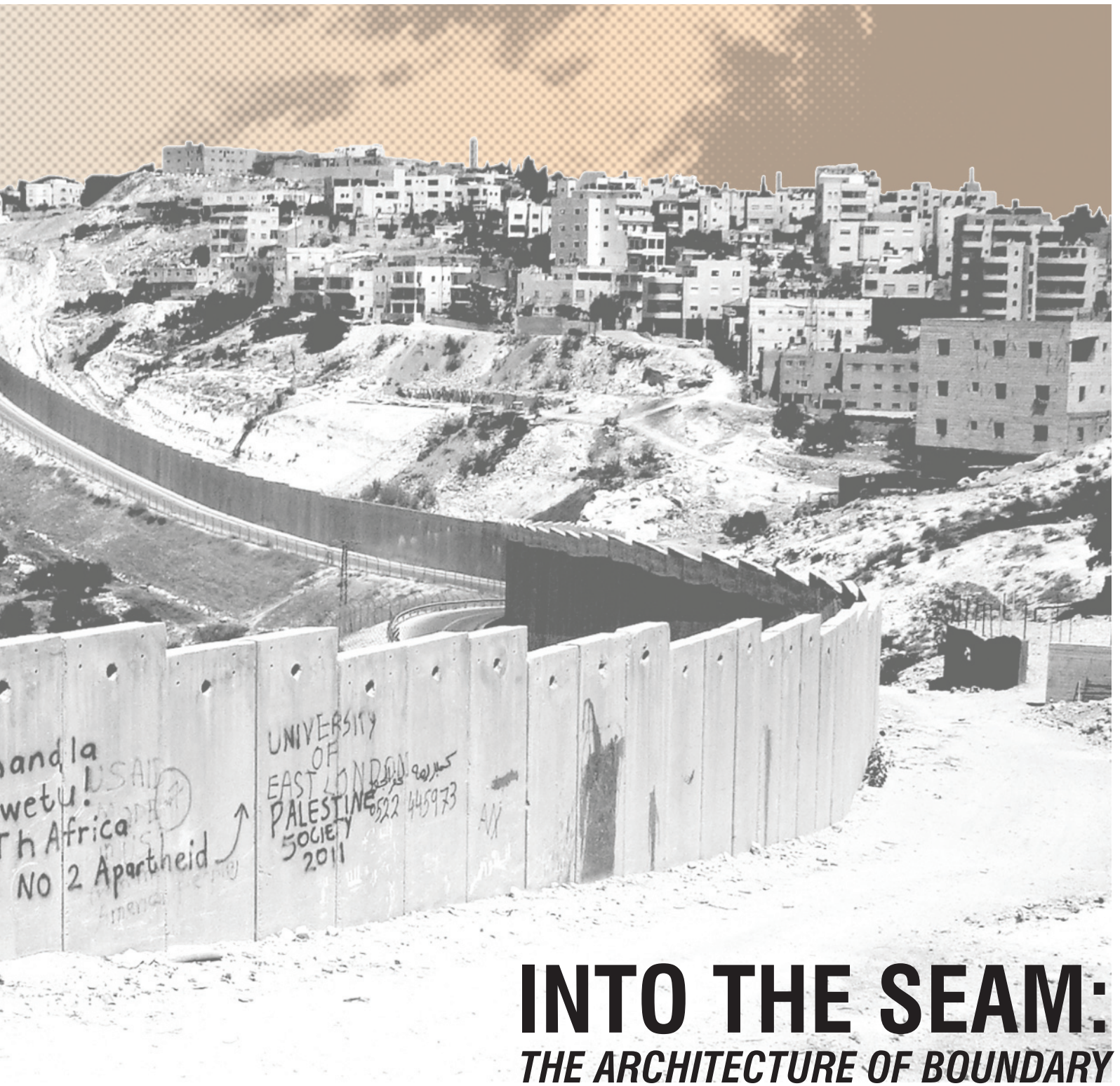
Under the Supervision of Professor Brian Kelly
Lincoln, Nebraska

May 2012

INTO THE SEAM:

THE ARCHITECTURE OF BOUNDARY





INTO THE SEAM:

THE ARCHITECTURE OF BOUNDARY

"

Architecture and war are not incompatible.
Architecture is war.
War is architecture.

I am at war with my time, with history,
with all authority that resides in fixed and frightened forms.

I am one of millions who do not fit in, who have no home, no family,
no doctrine, no firm place to call my own,
no known beginning or end,
no "sacred and primordial site."

I declare war on all icons and finalities,
on all histories that would chain me with my own falseness,
my own pitiful fears.

I know only moments, and lifetimes that are as moments,
and forms that appear with infinite strength,
then "melt into air."

I am an architect, a constructor of worlds,
a sensualist who worships the flesh, the melody,
a silhouette against the darkening sky.
I cannot know your name.
Nor you can know mine.

Tomorrow, we begin together the construction of a city.
"

War and Architecture
Lebbeus Woods
1997

ABSTRACT

The current conflict occurring in the State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is representative of a trend which is becoming common in the modern political era: the walling off of the 'first world' from the 'third world'; 'civilization' from 'wilderness'. Examples of this include (but not limited to) the US-Mexico border, the 38th Parallel between North and South Korea, the economic remnants of the Iron Curtain, the subdivision of the Balkans, and the division and nationalization of the Indian Subcontinent. These border zones reflect cultural, political, and economic differences. Recently, however, through infrastructural definition and physical manifestation, many of these borders have become architecturalized through built walls. The intent of this thesis is to investigate what is the critical and projective role of architecture as a mediating zone across an economic, political, and conflictual divide, beyond the wall.

Israel represents a unique and volatile manifestation of this question. Since its formation, the borders of Israel have been in a near-constant state of flux. Conflicts have expanded the borders considerably from those drawn at the original 1948 declaration. The current status of the border, since the 1967 War, consists of a number of systems working together. A zone of land, sitting on the Palestinian side, is what defines the border between what is the State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The primary piece of this Seam Zone is an 8-meter high concrete barrier, the West Bank Barrier Wall. A campaign of control and occupation conducted by the Israelis through the use of illegal settlements, military occupation, and checkpoints throughout the Palestinian Territories has effectively brought 82% of land in the West Bank under the direct control of Israel, of which up to 10% is located behind the Barrier Wall, in the Seam Zone. In a way the barrier is not altogether unnecessary: there

is a benefit to a defined border and suicide attacks within Israel have decreased since the construction of the wall in 2004.

What the actualization of the wall creates, however, is an attitude of erasure, separation and control. The wall implies an end, the end of 'civilization,' and what lies beyond is the wilderness of unknown. The wall is by its nature a non-place within the landscape and this adds no benefit to the continued evolution of the conflict/peace-process. Michel Foucault says that "buildings do not have an inherent politics, but act as a form for political aims to be applied to."¹ What is needed is a facilitator to create place and path across this divide, to create an engagement across the seam. This engagement would thereby evolve with the evolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself. The design would be a 'third place', a new space where neither side has true control or power, a neutralizer. This new space would work into the understanding of strangeness and otherness of the philosopher Richard Kearney², at once neutralizing and stressing the roles of host and guest, known versus unknown.

How can a conflict evolve and improve without an open and equal dialogue and understanding? Architecture can serve as the grounds for either conflict or reconciliation, but does not define the political nature of this interaction itself.

¹Leach, Neil. "Architecture or Revolution?" *Architectural Design: Beyond the Revolution* (1996): 10.

²Kearney, Richard and Victor E. Taylor. "A Conversation with Richard Kearney." *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* vol. 6 no. 2 (Spring 2005): 17-26.

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INTRODUCTION

The topic which my thesis project investigates is one that I believe is both timely and of dire importance. The formalization of relationships between the Israeli and Palestinian people (whether in a single or two-state solution) is of great importance to both regional security and the guarantee of human rights around the world.

My familiarity with the politics of the issue begin vaguely as a secondary student observing clips of the Second Intifada and occupation on television without really knowing the reality of the situation. I did not fully appreciate the gravity of the conflict and occupation until my chance opportunity to travel to Nablus, Palestine as a college student studying abroad in the summer of 2009. I accompanied a fellow international scholar on a three week trip to teach English and intercultural dialogue at a Palestinian refugee camp.

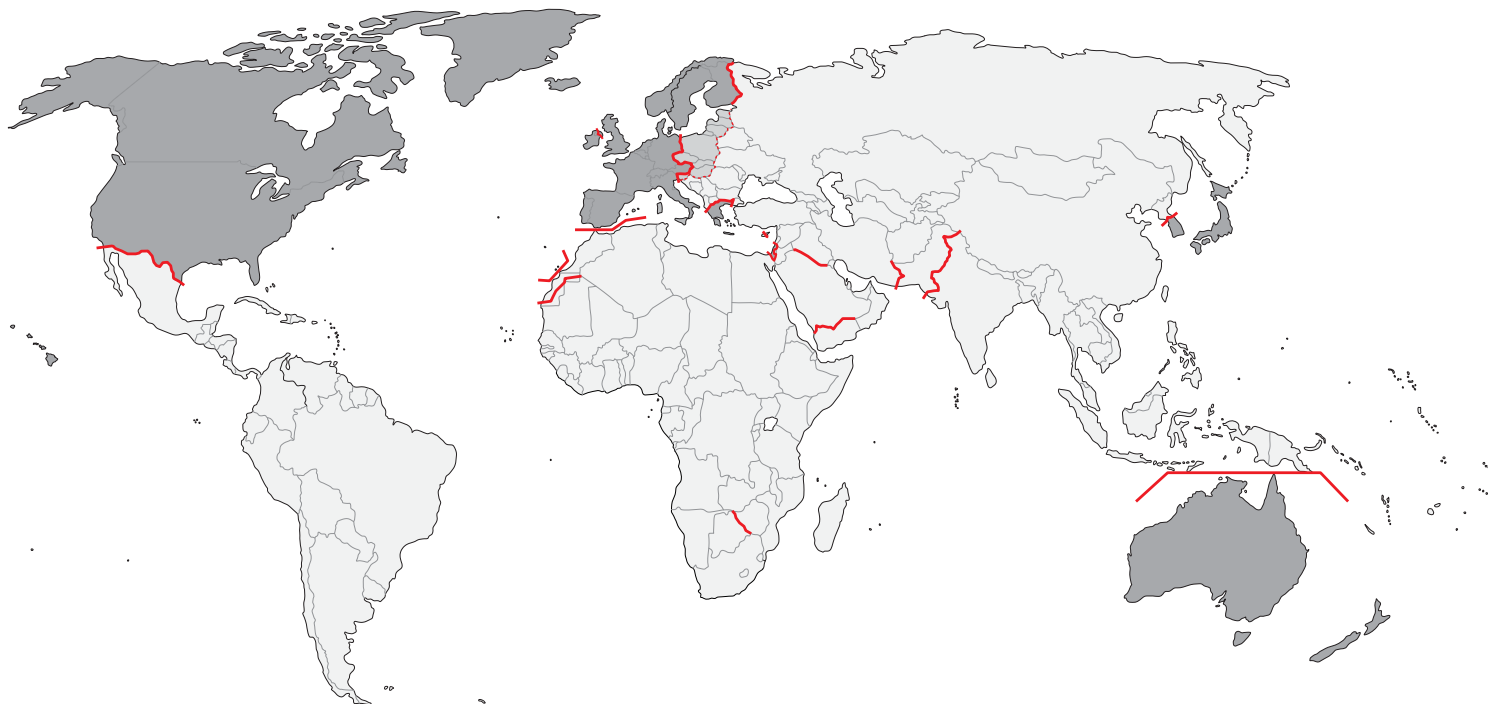
My experience in occupied Palestine had a profound and lasting impression on me and the way in which I observe and question the built environment around me. In Palestine, architecture is not just the passive site of daily life and inhabitation, but has taken an active role in the imposition of the occupation and domination of Palestinian life, from the snaking barrier wall and ever-watching guard towers to the precision demolition of urban fabric within Palestinian communities. Architecture has become a tool of warfare, control, and separation.

It is within this dynamic situation, a situation which the world seems to have tired of, in which I hope architecture and design can offer both a critique and a new angle. In a conflict which has gone on for millennia and has stagnated into a status quo, dialogue has become one-sided and ineffectual. I am not seeking to solve peace between these long-time opponents. What I am striving for is that through this design thesis, a new look at the value of continued dialogue might be revealed.





THE CONFLICT



Current border wall and fence systems around the world, as of 2012.

Current barrier systems:

- Korean DMZ
- Australian Northern Approach (maritime barrier)
- US-Mexico Fence
- EU Maritime Borders (West Coast of Africa)
- Melilla & Ceuta Fences
- EU Schengen Border (and future expansion)
- Israeli - Palestinian Barrier
- Northern Ireland Peace Walls
- Western Sahara - Morocco Wall
- Botswana - Zimbabwe
- Cyprus
- Saudi Arabian Border Fences
- Iran - Pakistan Border Wall
- Iran - India Border

THE WALLED WORLD



berlin



korean dmz



us-mexico



india-pakistan



west bank

The world is in a state of division. Border lines are being drawn and increasingly, since the middle of the 20th Century, are physicallized through architecture and infrastructural systems. These physical boundaries represents ethnic, cultural, language, and economic borders. Realized through concrete, steel, and wire fences, these barriers entrench and enforce a status quo and prevent further engagement and dialogue, as well as dividing the world into the 'haves and have-nots'.

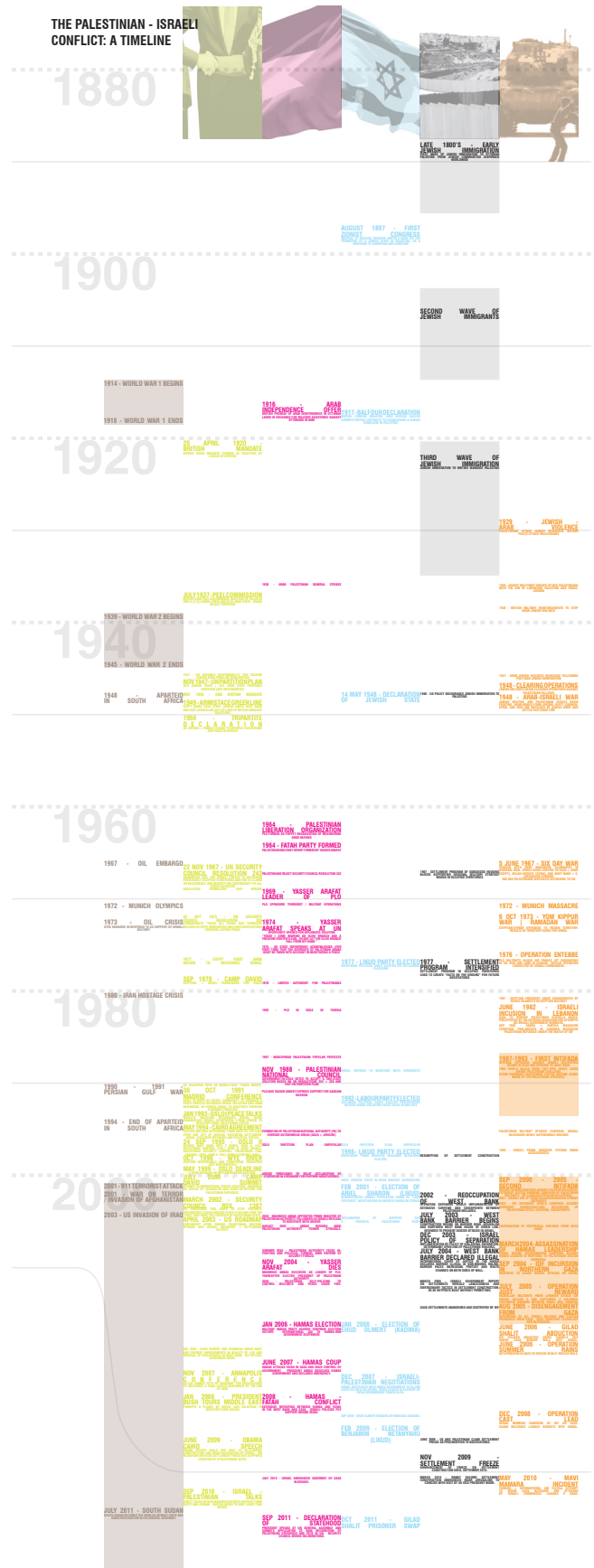
Many have these barriers sit along what is the border between the first world and third world. In other words, protecting 'us' from 'them,' the known from the unknown. These borders are heightened spots of violence, armed conflict and illegal immigration. Though the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, arguably the most famous barriers of the modern era, fell at the end of the century, less publicized but no less physical barriers have appeared with increasing frequency around the globe at these troubled spots, with the goal of preventing movement of people, arms, and illegal goods across these borders, and the side effect of preventing dialogue, as well.

TIMELINE OF THE CONFLICT

The West Bank Barrier is the latest culmination of a conflict which has existed since biblical history. This long-running and deeply emotional conflict stems from the numerous varied ethnic and religious groups which have claimed the land of Israel-Palestine as their rightful homeland.

In modern times, since the call for the Jewish resettlement at the end of the 19th Century, and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, events of this conflict have increased at an exponential rate, both in their intensity and interconnectedness. On first consideration, events on the timeline pose a jumbled and chaotic mess of various and competing parties and interests, a series of direct contradictions and policy reversals: military and occupation tactics against peace negotiations, Israeli against Palestinian political interests. The complexity and confusion of the timeline is directly reflected in the inability to find resolution to the conflict and occupation. Only by separating out and categorizing the timeline can patterns of activity and focus become apparent. Periods of intense political negotiation followed by intense military action. Israeli politics reflected in Palestinian political shifts and moods, and vice versa. This conflict is not one sided, nor at all simple. It is multifaceted and entangled, and a problem which will not be easily smoothed out.

THE PALESTINIAN - ISRAELI CONFLICT: A TIMELINE



The following timeline represents a study into the events of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict since just before the formation of Israel until the writing of this thesis in 2012. The timeline is formed both chronologically and categorically based on six event categories:

- _world events
- _peace negotiations
- _Palestinian politics and social events
- _Israeli politics and social events
- _settlement and occupation
- _finally armed conflict.

The goal of this timeline is to not only give a chronological understanding of the major events which have formed this conflict but also to provide a comparative analysis of the motivation and effect of varied events as their influence spreads across both political and time divisions.

The following pages provide a detailed view of the timeline.



1914 - WORLD WAR 1 BEGINS

1918 - WORLD WAR 1 ENDS

1916 - ARAB
INDEPENDENCE OFFER
BRITISH PROMISE OF ARAB INDEPENDENCE IN OTTOMAN
LANDS IN EXCHANGE FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGAINST
OTTOMANS IN WWI

israeli politics



*settlement +
occupation*



armed conflict



**LATE 1800'S - EARLY
JEWISH IMMIGRATION**
FIRST WAVE OF JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO OTTOMAN
PALESTINE FROM JEWISH COMMUNITIES DISPERSED
WORLDWIDE

**AUGUST 1897 - FIRST
ZIONIST CONGRESS**
MEETING TO DISCUSS THEODOR HERTZL'S BOOK ON THE
FORMATION OF A JEWISH STATE IN PALESTINE, AS A
RESPONSE TO EUROPEAN ANTI-SEMITISM

**SECOND WAVE OF
JEWISH IMMIGRANTS**

1917-BALFOUR DECLARATION
BRITISH FOREIGN MINISTER LORD ARTHUR BALFOR
COMMITTS BRITISH INTERESTS TO ESTABLISHING A JEWISH
HOMELAND IN PALESTINE

25 APRIL 1920 -
BRITISH MANDATE
BRITAIN GIVEN MANDATE POWERS IN PALESTINE BY
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1936 - ARAB PALESTINIAN GENERAL STRIKES

JULY 1937-PEEL COMMISSION

1939 - WORLD WAR 2 BEGINS

1945 - WORLD WAR 2 ENDS

1947 - UN ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOLVING JEWISH-ARAB PROBLEM FROM BRITISH

NOV 1947-UNPARTITION PLAN
56% JEWISH STATE | 44% ARAB STATE PROPOSED
PARTITION [NOT IMPLEMENTED]

1948 - SOUTH

APARTEID
AFRICA

MAY 1948 - END BRITISH MANDATE

1949-ARMISTICE GREEN LINE

**1950 - TRIPARTITE
DECLARATION**
US, BRITAIN + FRANCE PLEDGE TO ENFORCE 1949 BORDER
AND PEACE IN REGION

**THIRD WAVE OF
JEWISH IMMIGRATION**
JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO BRITISH MANDATE PALESTINE

1929 - ARAB-JEWISH VIOLENCE
PALESTINIANS ATTACK JEWISH RESIDENTS, BRITISH
POLICE ATTACK PALESTINIANS

**1936 - ZIONIST MILITANT GROUPS ATTACK PALESTINIANS
WITH THE AIM OF LIBERATING PALESTINE AND TRANS-
JORDAN**

**1938 - BRITISH MILITARY REINFORCEMENTS TO STOP
ARAB-JEWISH VIOLENCE**

**1947 - ARAB-JEWISH VIOLENCE INCREASES FOLLOWING
POST-WAR JEWISH IMMIGRATION**

1948 - CLEARING OPERATIONS
JEWISH MILITANTS BEGIN CLEARING OPERATIONS AGAINST
PALESTINIAN VILLAGES

1948 - ARAB-ISRAELI WAR
JEWISH MILITIAS AND PALESTINIAN FORCES BEGIN
FIGHTING. ARAB ARMIES FROM JORDAN, EGYPT, LEBANON,
SYRIA, AND IRAQ ARE REPULSED BY JEWISH ARMY AND
SETTLE FOR CEASE FIRE

**14 MAY 1948 - DECLARATION
OF JEWISH STATE**

**1948 - US POLICY ENCOURAGES JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO
PALESTINE**

1960

1964 - PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION
PLO FORMED AS PUPPET ORGANIZATION OF NEIGHBORING ARAB NATIONS

1964 - FATAH PARTY FORMED
PALESTINIAN MILITANT GROUP FORMED BY YASSER ARAFAT

1967 - OIL EMBARGO

22 NOV 1967 - UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242
UNANIMOUS CALL FOR ISRAELI FORCES TO WITHDRAW FROM NEWLY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND END TO CLAIMS OR BELIGERENCY AND RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY OF ALL STATES IN REGION
RESOLUTION FORMALIZED 1949 BORDER

PALESTINIANS REJECT SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242

1969 - YASSER ARAFAT LEADER OF PLO

PLO SPONSORS TERRORIST / MILITANT OPERATIONS

1972 - MUNICH OLYMPICS

1973 - OIL CRISIS
OPEC EMBARGO IN RESPONSE TO US SUPPORT OF ISRAELI MILITARY
22 OCT 1973 - UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 338
COMBATANTS "CEASE ALL FIRING AND TERMINATE MILITARY ACTIVITY IMMEDIATELY AND START NEGOTIATIONS TOWARDS LASTING PEACE"

1974 - YASSER ARAFAT SPEAKS AT UN

OPPORTUNITY OPENED FOR DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION
"TODAY I COME BEARING AN OLIVE BRANCH AND A FREEDOM FIGHTER'S GUN. DO NOT LET THE OLIVE BRANCH FALL FROM MY HAND."

1975 - US STATE DEPARTMENT ACKNOWLEDGES (FOR FIRST TIME) THAT THE INTERESTS OF PALSTINIAN ARABS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN NEGOTIATING A PEACE

1977 - EGYPT FIRST ARAB NATION TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL

SEP 1978 - CAMP DAVID
EGYPTIAN + ISRAELI FRAMEWORK FOR PEACE

1978 - LIMITED AUTONOMY FOR PALESTINIANS

1980

1980 - IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS

1982 - PLO IN EXILE IN TUNISIA

1987 - WIDESPREAD PALESTINIAN POPULAR PROTESTS

NOV 1988 - PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL

GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE VOTES TO ACCEPT A TWO-STATE SOLUTION BASED ON UN RESOLUTIONS 242 + 338 AND 1947 UN PARTITION PLAN

1990 - PERSIAN GULF WAR

30 OCT 1991 - MADRID CONFERENCE

EARLY ATTEMPT BY INTNTL COMMUNITY TO ORGANIZE A PEACE PROCESS BETWEEN ISRAEL PALESTINE AND ARAB NEIGHBORS. US FORCES ISRAEL TO NEGOTIATE THROUGH ECONOMIC PENALTIES

PLO AND YASSER ARAFAT EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR SADDAM HUSSEIN

1994 - END OF APARTEID IN SOUTH AFRICA

JAN 1993 - OSLO PEACE TALKS
RESULTS: PALESTINE RECOGNIZES ISRAEL; BEGIN DISMANTLING ISRAELI OCCUPATION; 5-YEAR PERIOD TO NEGOTIATE FINAL PALESTINIAN STATUS

MAY 1994 - CAIRO AGREEMENT
OUTLINE MILITARY WITHDRAWL FROM MOST OF THE GAZA STRIP AND CITY OF JERICO, EXCLUDING SETTLEMENT AREAS. EXCLUDES REFUGESS AND POLITICAL STATUS.

FORMATION OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY (PA) TO OVERSEE AUTONOMOUS AREAS (GAZA + JERICHO)

24 SEP 1995 - OSLO II
DIVIDED WEST BANK INTO 3 ZONES: ZONE A: FULL PALESTINIAN CONTROL (18%), ZONE B: JOINT ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN SECURITY CONTROL, PALESTINIAN CIVIL CONTROL (22%), ZONE C: FULL ISRAELI CONTROL (60%)

OSLO PARTITION PLAN UNPOPULAR

OCT 1998 - WYE RIVER
FURTHER WITHDRAWALS AND TERRITORIAL TRANSFERS (NOT IMPLEMENTED)

MAY 1999 - OSLO DEADLINE
A YEAR BEHIND THE IMPLEMENTATION BECHEN

ISRAELI REFUSED TO BEGIN NEGOTIATION OF

5 JUNE 1967 - SIX DAY WAR

1967 - SETTLEMENT PROGRAM OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING BLOCKS SUPPORTING REGIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY BEGINS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

TENSION WITH ARAB NEIGHBORS CULMINATES IN REGIONAL WAR. ISRAEL GAINS CONTROL OF GAZA + SINAI (EGYPT), GOLAN HEIGHTS (SYRIA), AND WEST BANK + E. JERUSALEM (JORDAN)
500,000 PALESTINIANS DISPLACED ACCORDING TO UN

1972 - MUNICH MASSACRE

6 OCT 1973 - YOM KIPPUR WAR | RAMADAN WAR

EGYPTIAN/SYRIAN OFFENSIVE TO REGAIN TERRITORY. RESULTS IN TERRITORY GAINS FOR ISRAEL

1976 - OPERATION ENTEBBE

PLO MILITANTS HIJACK AIR FRANCE JET ORIGINATING IN TEL AVIV AND LAND IN UGANDA. RESCUE OPERATION CONDUCTED BY ISRAELI COMMANDOS.

1977 - LIKUD PARTY ELECTED

RIGHT-WING POLITICAL PARTY ELECTED ON SETTLEMENT PLATFORM

1977 - SETTLEMENT PROGRAM INTENSIFIED
SETTLEMENT PROGRAM IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES USED TO CREATE "FACTS ON THE GROUND" FOR FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS

1981 - EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT ASSASSINATED BY ROGUE ISLAMISTS IN EGYPTIAN MILITARY

JUNE 1982 - ISRAELI INCUSION IN LEBANON

GOAL TO REMOVE PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA BASES. PRECIPITATED BY PALESTINIAN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS ON ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.
SEP 1982 - SABRA + SHATILA MASSACRE
CHRISTIAN PHALANGISTS IN LEBANON MASSACRE
PALESTINIAN REFUGEES UNDER THE WATCH OF IDF

ISRAEL REFUSES TO NEGOTIATE WITH TERRORISTS

1987-1993 - FIRST INTIFADA

INTIFADA (UPRISING) AGAINST ISRAELI OCCUPATION BEGINS IN GAZA AND SPREADS TO WEST BANK
1000 PEOPLE KILLED FROM 1987-1993; HEAVY LOSSES AMONG PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS.
STONE-THROWING PALESTINIAN YOUTHS BECOME ICONIC IMAGE OF THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE.

1992-LABOURPARTYELECTED

LEFT-WING POLITICAL PARTY ELECTED PRECIPITATING INTENSE ISRAEL-PALESTINE PEACE TALKS IN MID-90'S

PALESTINIAN MILITANT ATTACKS CONTINUE; ISRAELI BLOCKADES NEWLY AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

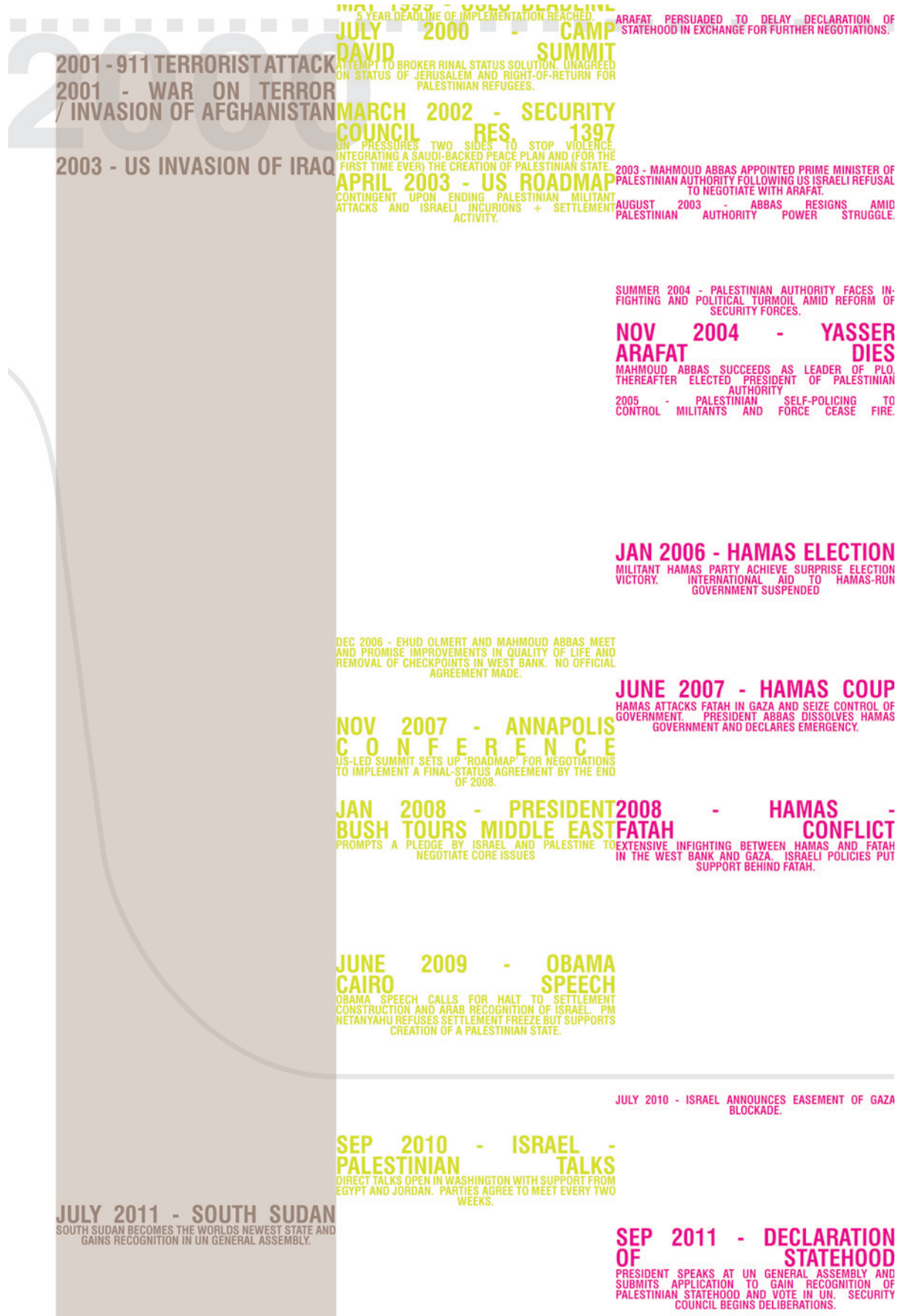
OSLO PARTITION PLAN UNPOPULAR

1996- LIKUD PARTY ELECTED

RIGHT-WING PRIME MINISTER BENJAMIN NETANYAHU ELECTED

RESUMPTION OF SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION

1995 - ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN ASSASSINATED



ARIEL SHARON VISITS AL-AQSA MOSQUE (JERUSALEM)

FEB 2001 - ELECTION OF ARIEL SHARON (LIKUD)
DEMONSTRATES ISRAELI POPULATION TIRING OF "LAND FOR PEACE" NEGOTIATIONS IN FAVOR OF HARDLINE STANCE

DECLARATION OF A PEACEFUL SUPPORT FOR STATE OF PALESTINIAN

2002 - REOCCUPATION OF WEST BANK
OPERATION DEFENSIVE SHIELD IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTENSIVE CURFEWS AND CHECKPOINTS BETWEEN PALESTINIAN ENCLAVES.

JULY 2003 - WEST BANK BARRIER BEGINS
CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON BARRIER NEAR JERUSALEM AND NORTHERN WEST BANK INSIDE OF GREEN LINE. INTENDED TO PREVENT SUICIDE ATTACKS IN ISRAEL.

DEC 2003 - ISRAELI POLICY OF SEPARATION
IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY OF UNILATERAL SEPARATION. DETERMINANT UPON END OF PALESTINIAN VIOLENCE.

JULY 2004 - WEST BANK BARRIER DECLARED ILLEGAL
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE AT THE HAGUE DECLARES BARRIER ILLEGAL IN NON-BINDING RULING. BARRIER FACES INCREASING PROTEST AND ROUTE CHANGES ON BOTH SIDES OF WALL.

MARCH 2005 - ISRAELI GOVERNMENT REPORT ON SETTLEMENTS REVEALS LAWLESSNESS AND DIVERSIONARY TACTICS IN SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION. 20-30 OUTPOSTS BUILT WITHOUT PERMITTING.

GAZA SETTLEMENTS ABANDONED AND DESTROYED BY IDF.

JAN 2006 - ELECTION OF EHUD OLMERT (KADIMA)

DEC 2007 - ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATIONS
ISRAEL NEGOTIATES WITH ABBAS GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW SUPPLIES INTO PALESTINE. TAKES STANCE IN SUPPORT OF FATAH GOVERNMENT POWER IN P.A.

SEP 2008 - EHUD OLMERT RESIGNS IN FINANCIAL SCANDAL

FEB 2009 - ELECTION OF BENJAMIN NETANYAHU (LIKUD)

JUNE 2009 - US AND PALESTINIAN CLAIM SETTLEMENT FREEZE AS PRECONDITION TO NEGOTIATIONS.

NOV 2009 - SETTLEMENT FREEZE
ANNOUNCEMENT OF FREEZE ON SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2010.

MARCH 2010 - RAMAT SHLOMO SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION ANNOUNCED (NEAR JERUSALEM) TO COINCIDE WITH VISIT BY US VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN.

OCT 2011 - GILAD SHALIT PRISONER SWAP

SEP 2000 - 2005 SECOND INTIFADA

VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST OCCUPATION FORCES; EXTENSIVE SUICIDE BOMBING CAMPAIGN BY PALESTINIAN MILITANTS. IDF LAUNCHES RETALIATION STRIKES

2001 - ISRAELI USE OF TARGETED ASSASSINATION STRIKES INCREASES
2002 - IDF DEFENSIVE SHIELD CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORIST INFRASTRUCTURE; OCCUPATION OF PALESTINIAN CITIES. CURFEWS, CHECKPOINTS.

CONTINUATION OF RECIPROCAL VIOLENCE FROM BOTH SIDES.

MARCH 2004 - ASSASSINATION OF HAMAS LEADERSHIP
ISRAEL BEGINS ASSASSINATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST HAMAS LEADERS IN RESPONSE TO PALESTINIAN SUICIDE BOMBINGS.

SEP 2004 - IDF INCURSION IN NORTHERN GAZA
RESPONSE TO GAZAN ROCKET ATTACKS ON ISRAEL

JULY 2005 - OPERATION JUST REWARD

HEZBOLLAH MILITANTS FROM LEBANON ATTACK IDF PATROL KILLING 3 AND CAPTURING 2 SOLDIERS. EXCHANGED BOMBING BETWEEN ISRAEL AND LEBANON.

AUG 2005 - DISENGAGEMENT FROM GAZA

WITHDRAWAL OF ALL ISRAELI MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PRESENCE FROM GAZA. GAZA TERRITORY CLOSED-OFF AND BLOCKADED.

JUNE 2006 - GILAD SHALIT ABDUCTION
IDF SOLDIER ABDUCTED USING TUNNELS DUG UNDER GAZA BORDER WALL INTO ISRAEL.

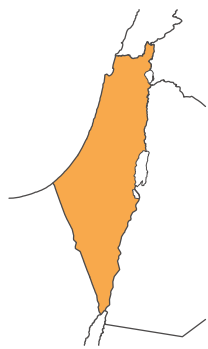
JUNE 2006 - OPERATION SUMMER RAINS
IDF OPERATION IN GAZA TO RESCUE SHALIT; RESCUE FAILS.

DEC 2008 - OPERATION CAST LEAD

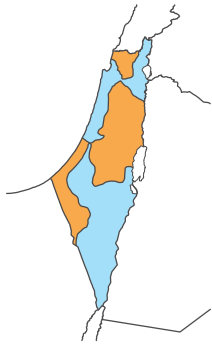
AERIAL BOMBING CAMPAIGN BY IDF ON GAZA. GAZAN MILITANTS LAUNCH ROCKETS INTO ISRAEL.

MAY 2010 - MAVI MAMARA INCIDENT

TURKISH + INTERNATIONAL AID FLOTILA ATTEMPT TO BREAK GAZA BLOCKADE ARE ATTACKED BY ISRAELI COMMANDOS LEAVING 9 DEAD.



1922 British Mandate
Palestine



1947 UN Partition Plan
(Not Implemented)



1948 Armistice
(Green Line)



1967 Six Day War



1982 Lebanon War



1995 Oslo Accords

One result of this continued and dynamic conflict is a shifting of the boundaries of the State of Israel and the control of the Palestinian Territories. Since its foundation, Israel has been in a constant state of preparedness to defend itself and its right to exist which has resulted in numerous wars with its Arab neighbors. Each of these wars has grown or shrunk the boundaries and control of Israel, as well as the limit of control of the Palestinians.

This shift is shown through the diagram above, with orange representing Palestinian control and blue representing Israeli control. As time has passed the dynamic flux of these boundaries has reduced, solidifying into a more fixed state.

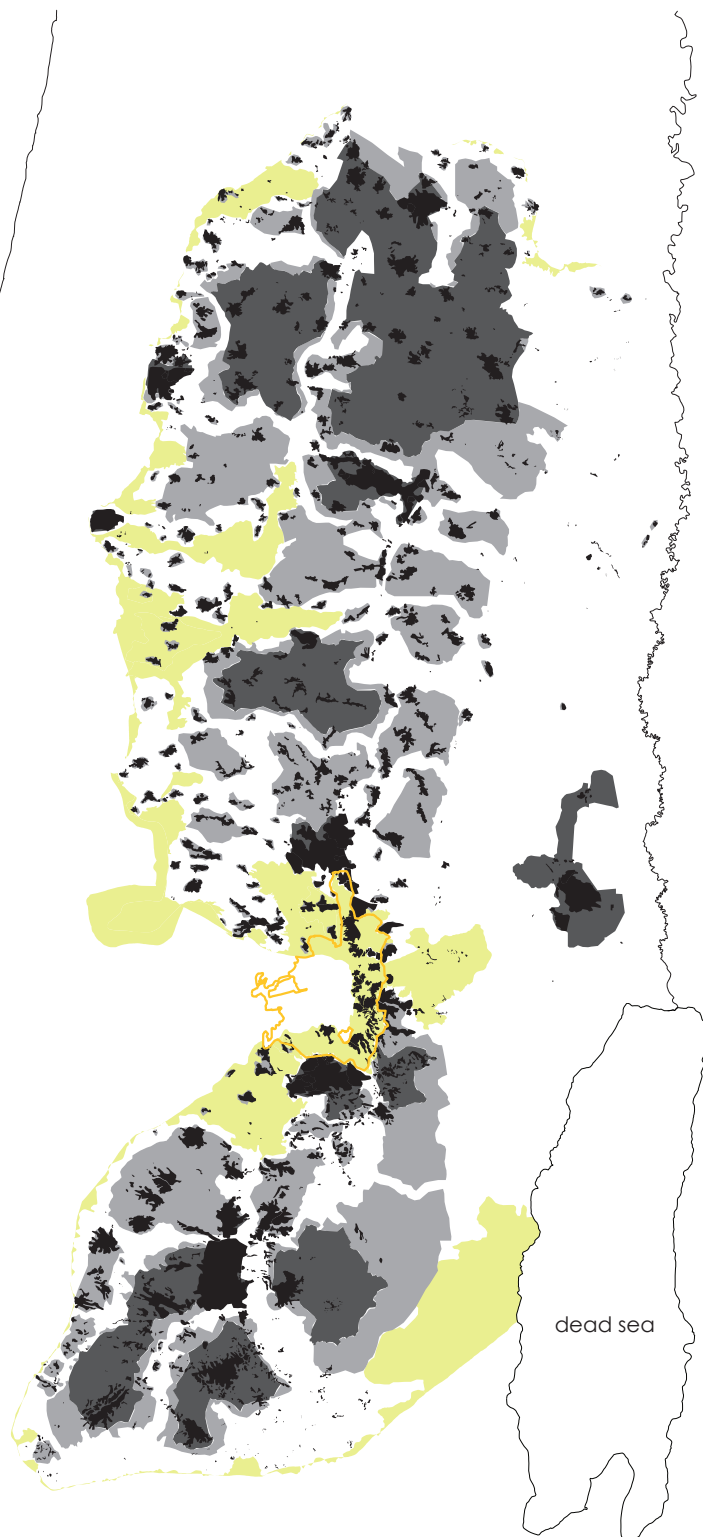
At the time of this writing, Israel exhibits occupational control over the majority of the West Bank while the Palestinian Authority exhibits control over small portions of the West Bank as well as the Gaza Strip. The Seam which defines to boundary between these two entities (a 'state' of Palestine currently does not exist) becomes a contested zone of land and the adjacencies of urban and occupied spaces sets this contest into direct conflict.

The map at right shows the zones of palestinian control in relationship to the seam zone. The seam zone represents about 12% of the total land of the West Bank. All area not shaded is under full Israeli control

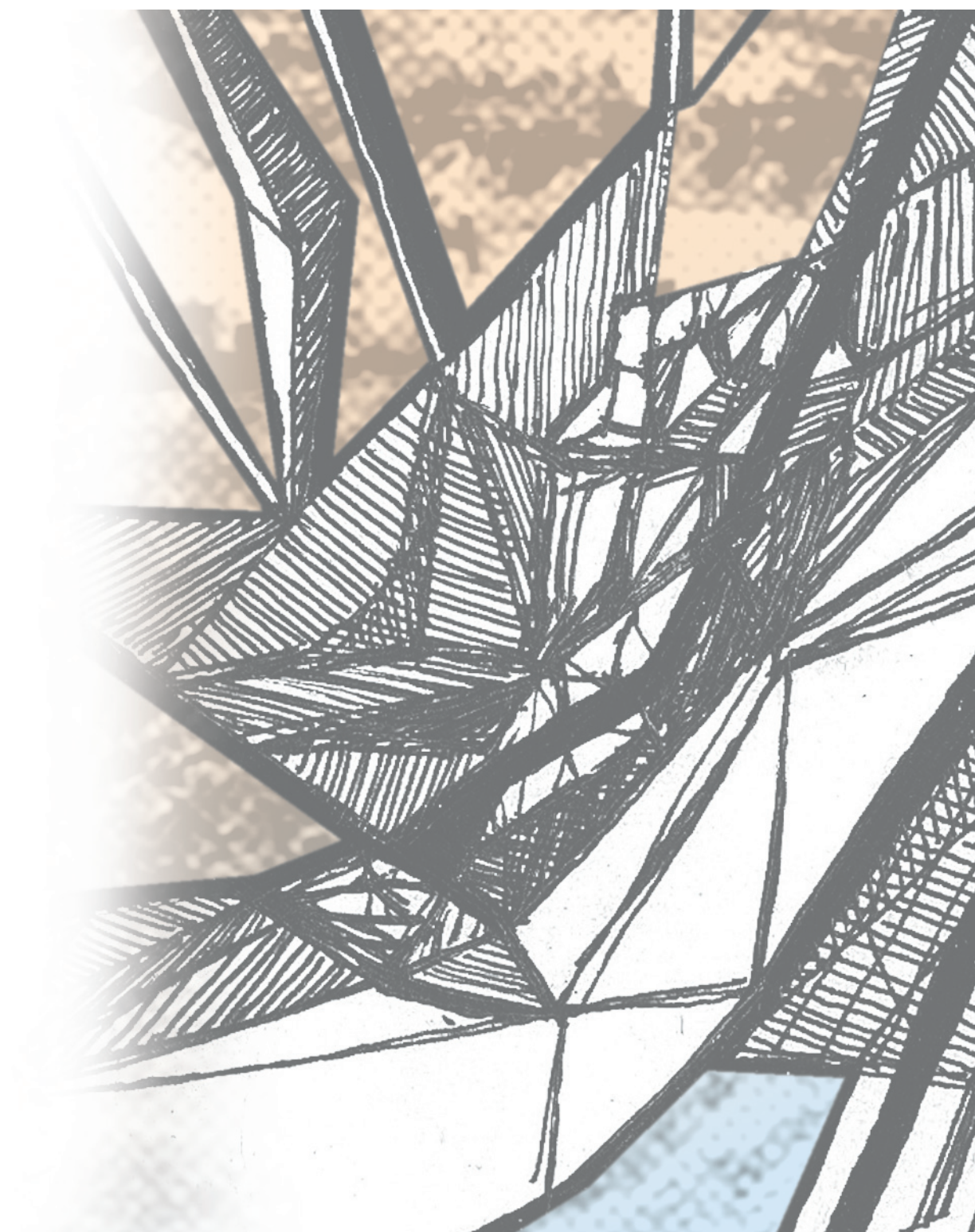
SHIFTING SEAM

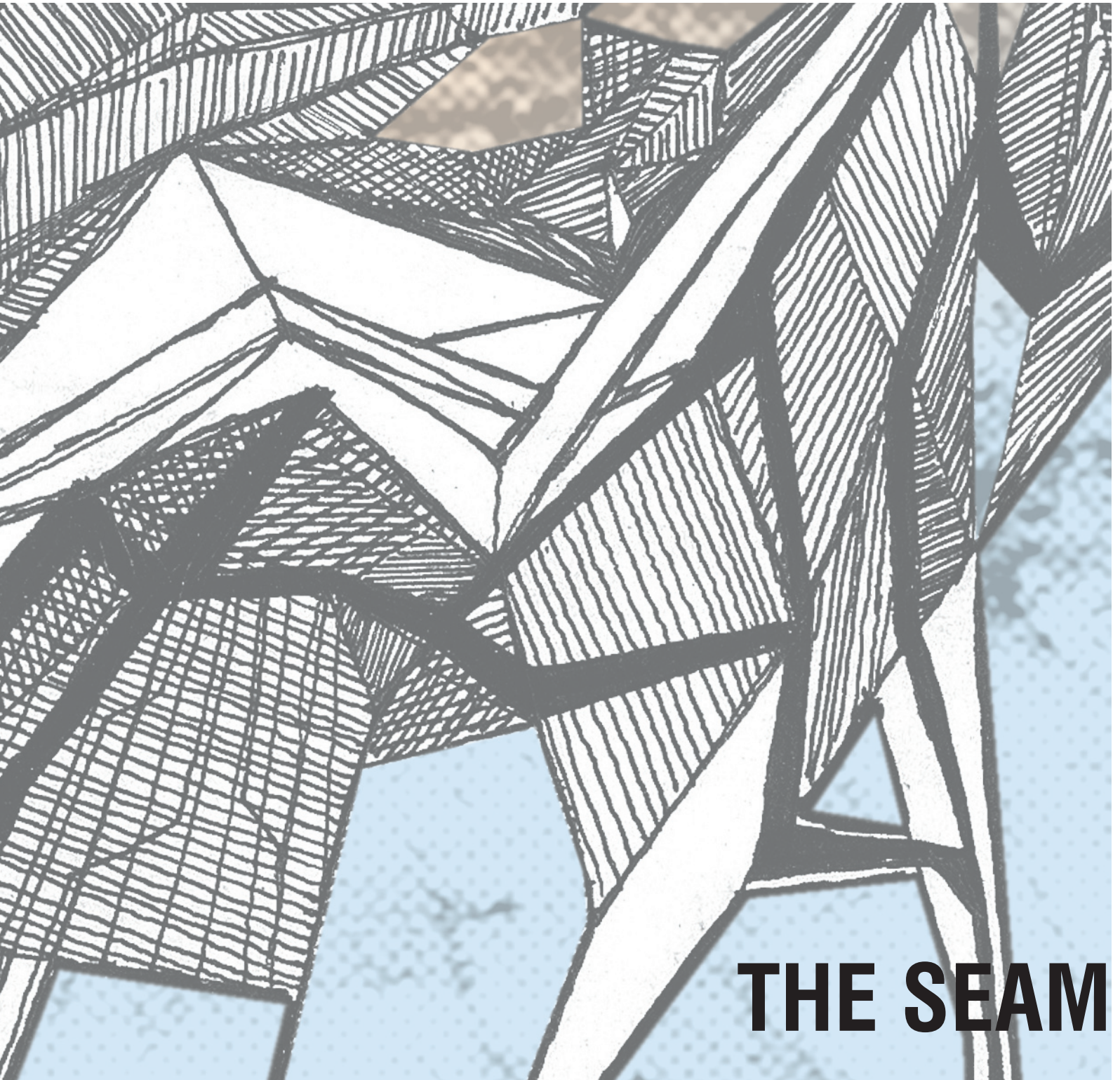
- Palestinian Urban Areas
- Palestinian Civil and Military Control
- Palestinian Civil Control / Israeli Military Control
- Israeli Civil and Military Control
- Seam Zone

mediterranean sea



dead sea





THE SEAM

The West Bank Separation Barrier began construction in 2003 under Israeli Defense Force direction with the goal of protecting Israel from Palestinian suicide bombings in the wake of the Second Intifada.

The projected path of the barrier has seen numerous revisions due to lobbying efforts from both sides but remains situated primarily inside West Bank (Palestinian) territory. While the defined greenline (armistice line) between Israel and Palestine is 196 miles long, the actual path of the barrier runs 437 miles as it snakes between Israeli and Palestinian communities and balloons out to envelope Israeli settlements within the West Bank.

The average width of the barrier zone which runs along the wall length is 200 ft. and consists of a series of surveillance and monitoring equipment. The actual manifestation of the wall itself is composed of two systems: an electronically monitored fence which exists primarily in rural areas and a prefabricated concrete barrier which exists primarily in heavily urbanized areas and has become the primary face of the antagonism of the occupation. The concrete barrier runs for over 10% of the length of the seam zone at a height of 26 feet, essentially cutting off all contact or engagement across its length.

The map to the right (expanded in the following pages) shows the planned and built lengths of wall as of the writing of this thesis (2012). The route of the wall is in an almost constant state of flux and revision and some areas are not yet constructed and subject to change.

The mappings are read to the following key:

_green line - the (green) armistice line from 1948

_bold solid line - barrier already constructed

_bold dashed line - barrier under construction

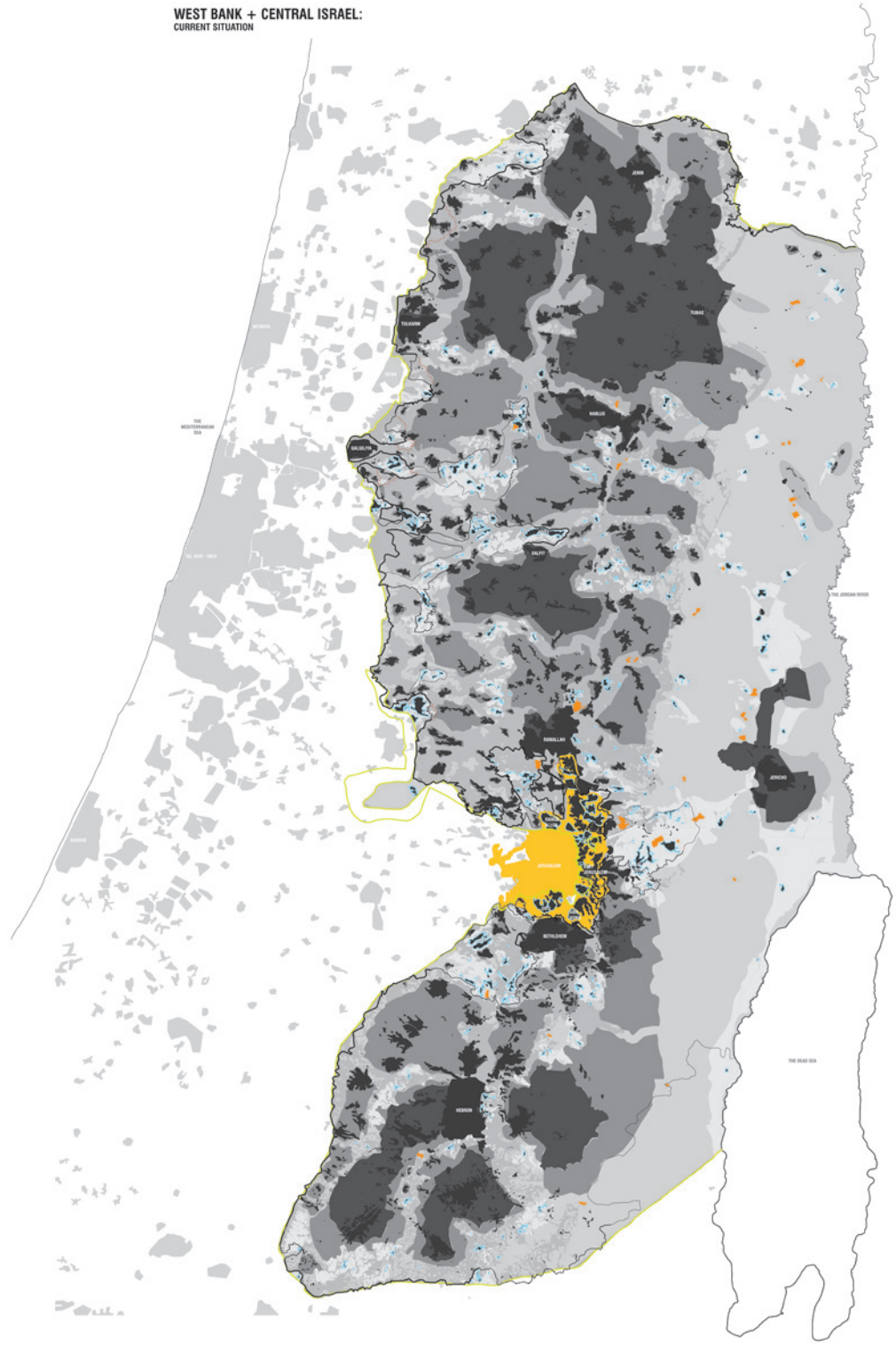
_small solid line - planned and approved

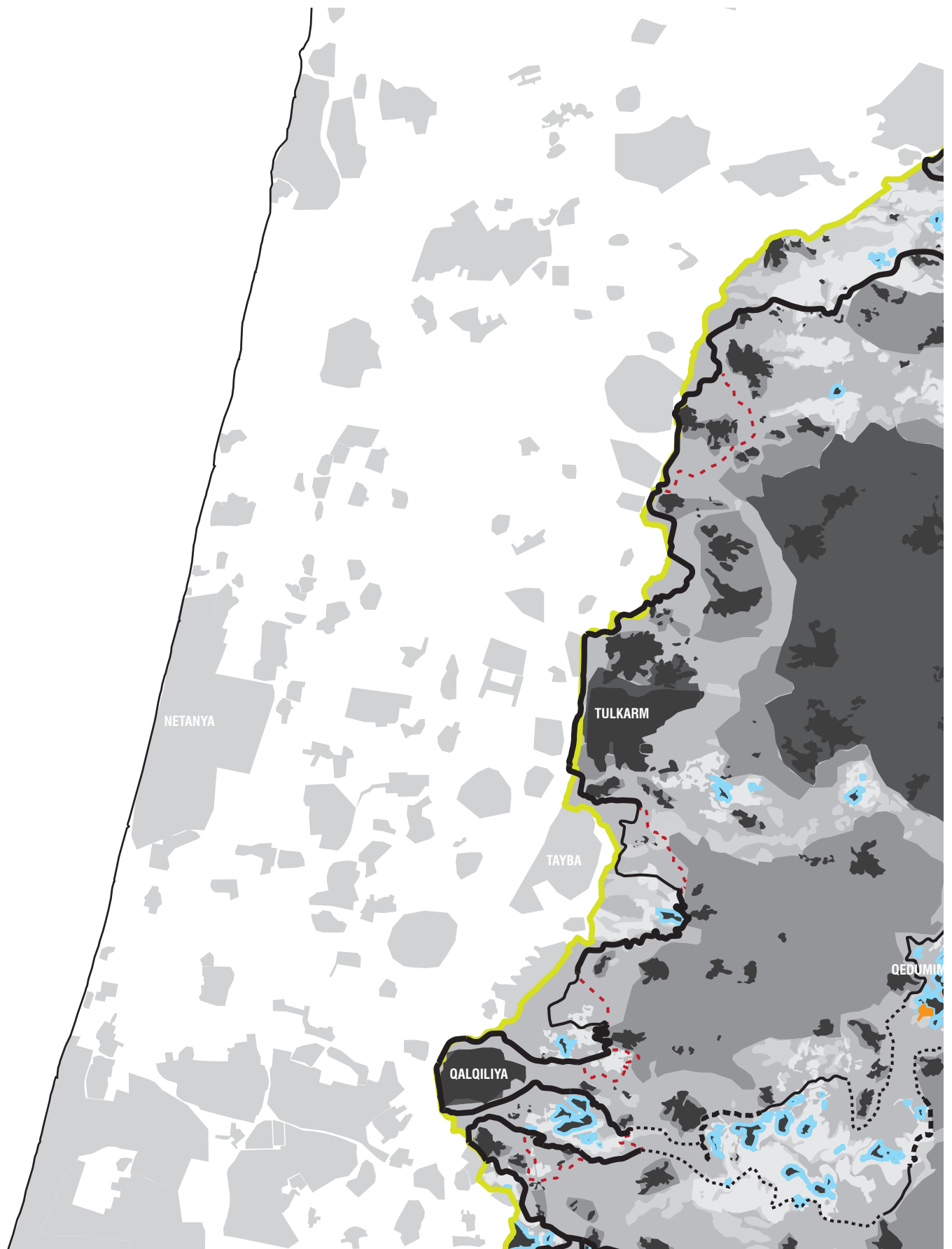
_small dashed line - planned, awaiting approval

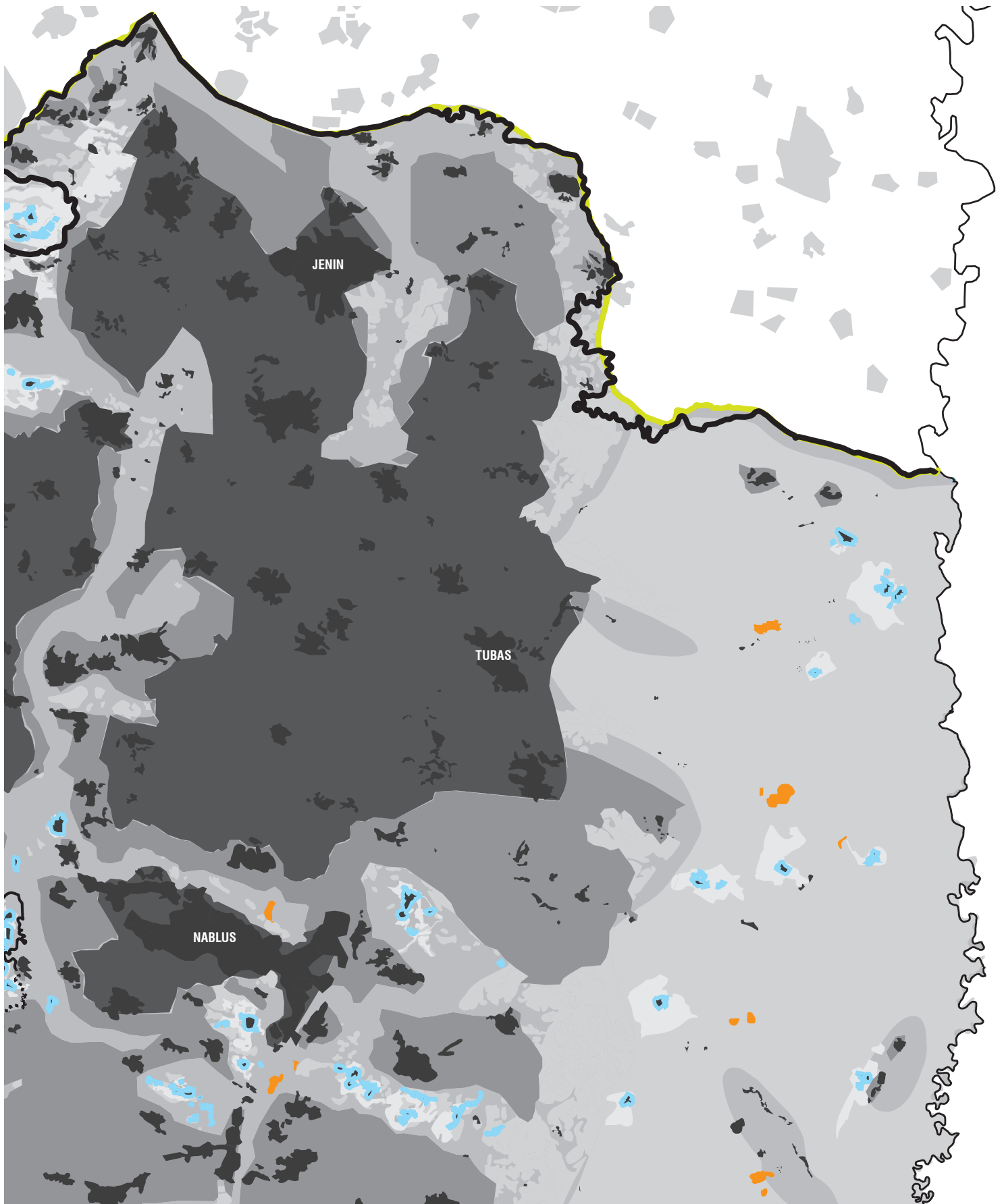
_red dashed line - barrier removed

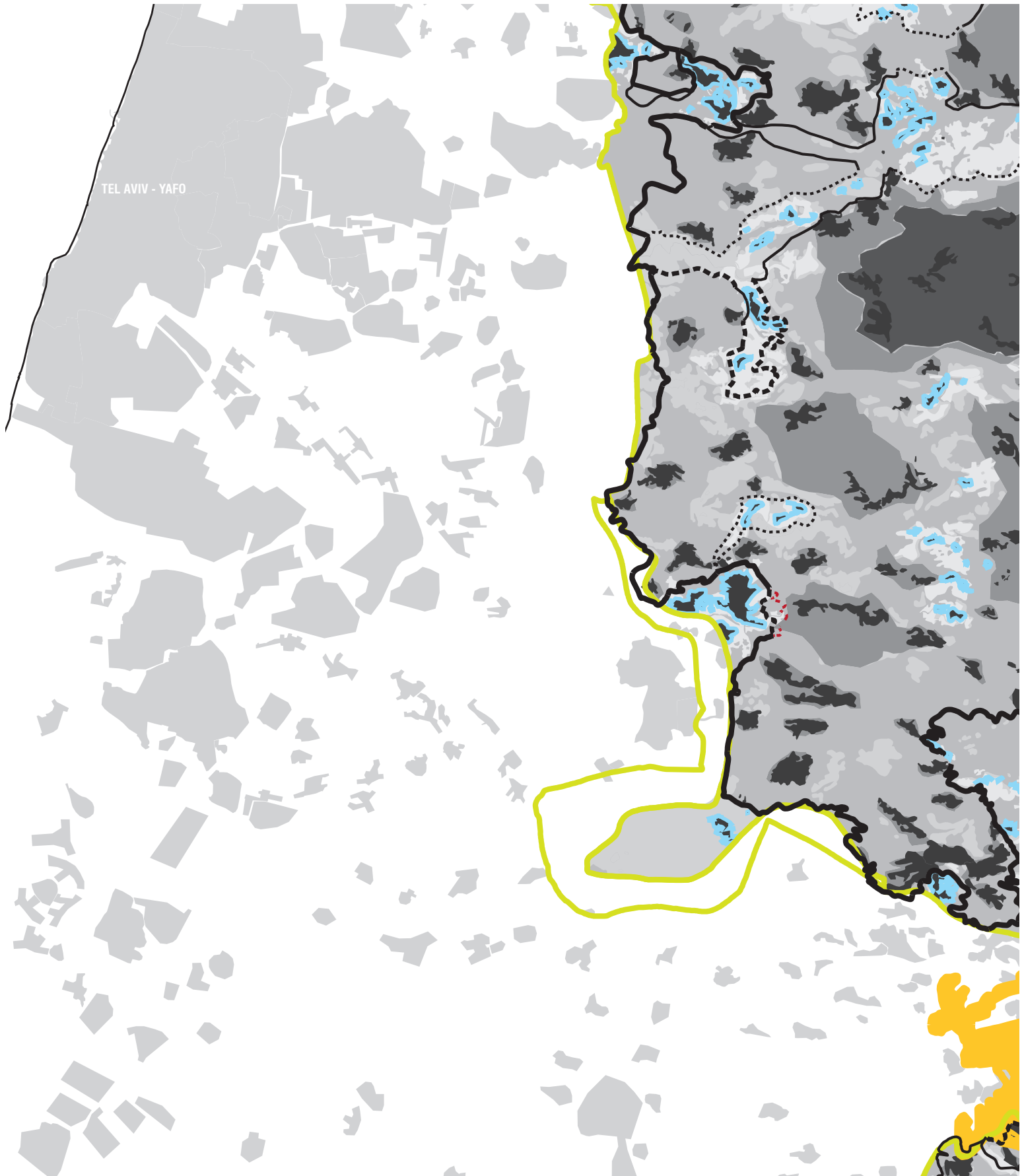
THE WEST BANK BARRIER

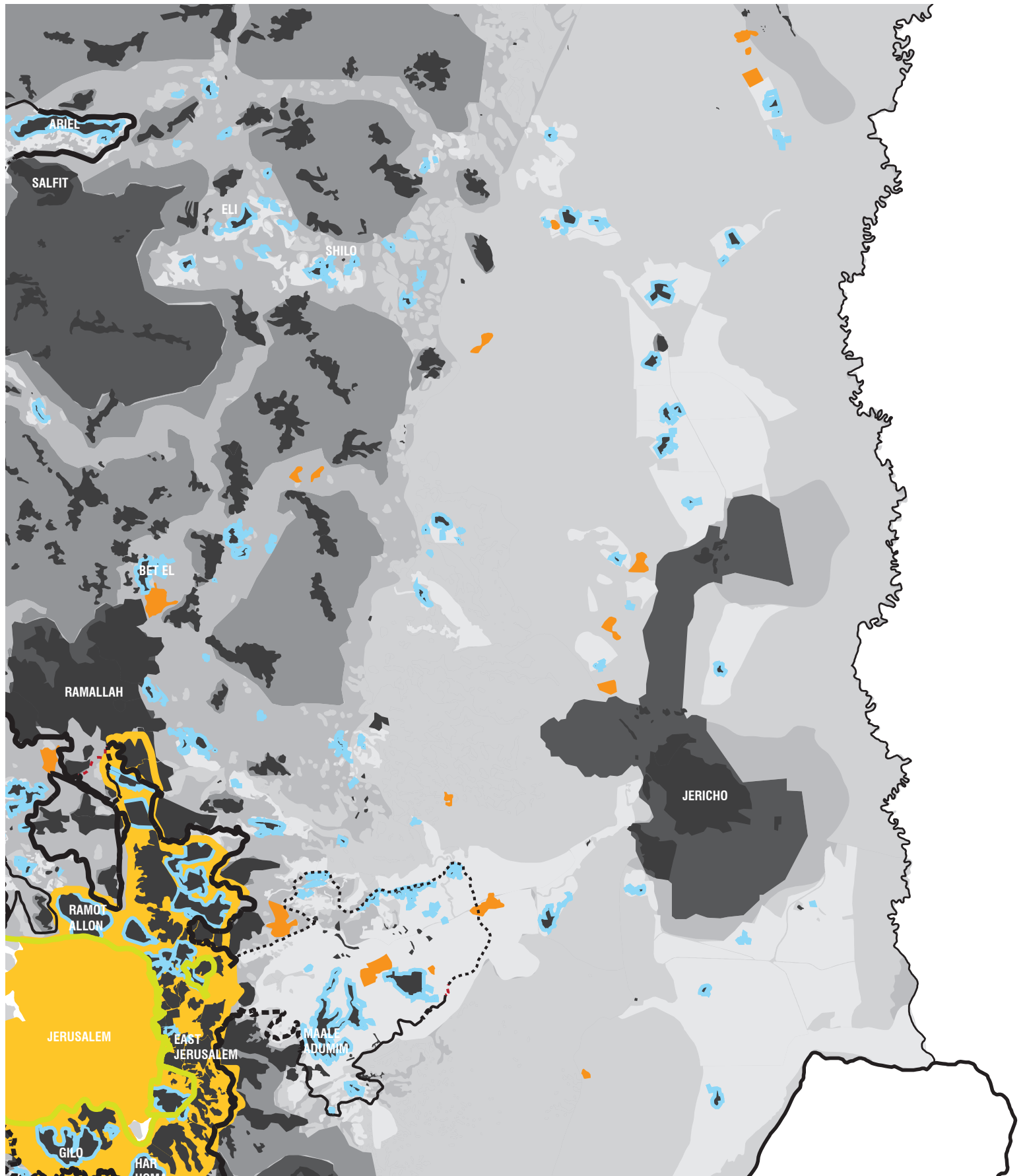
WEST BANK + CENTRAL ISRAEL:
CURRENT SITUATION

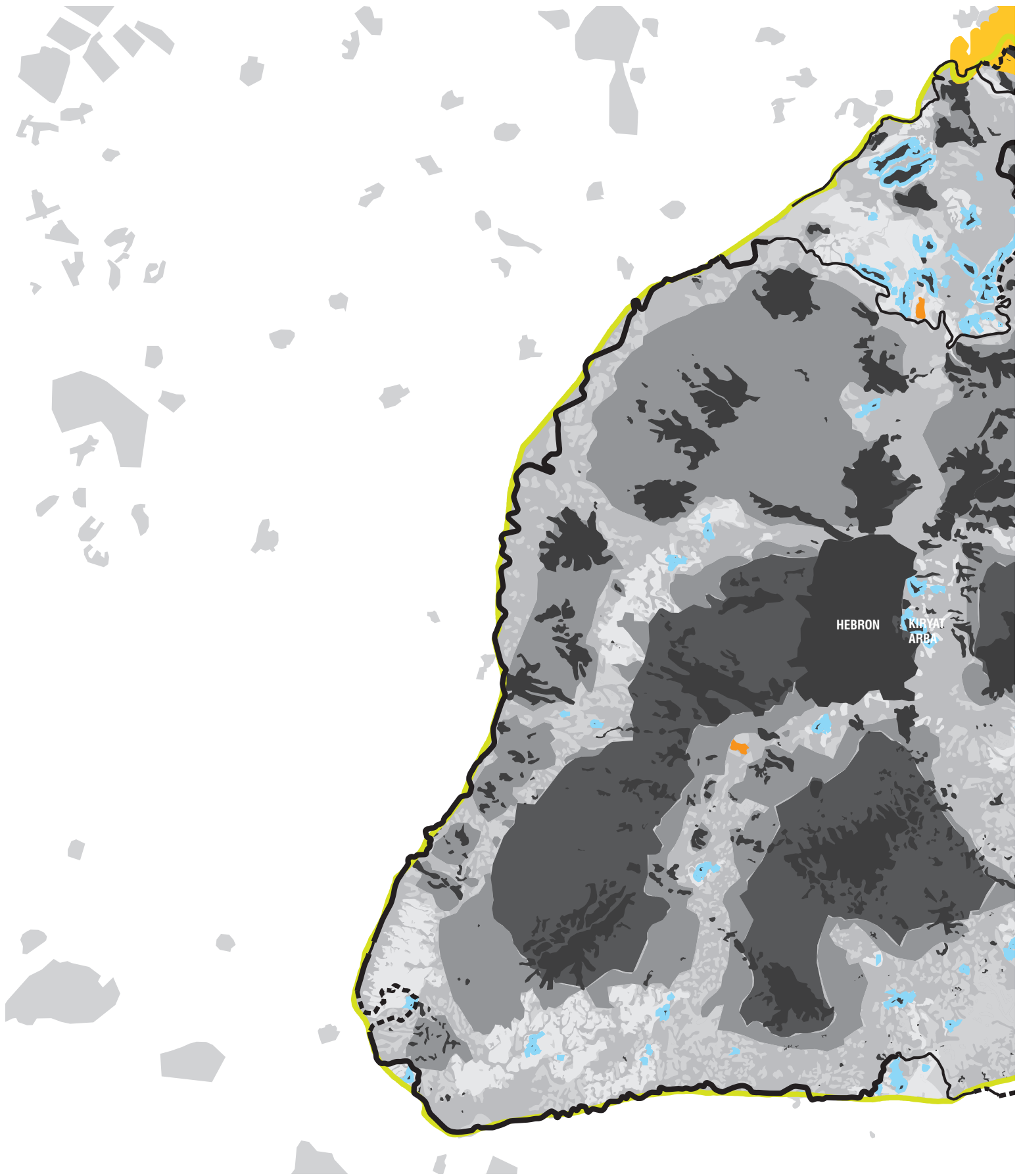


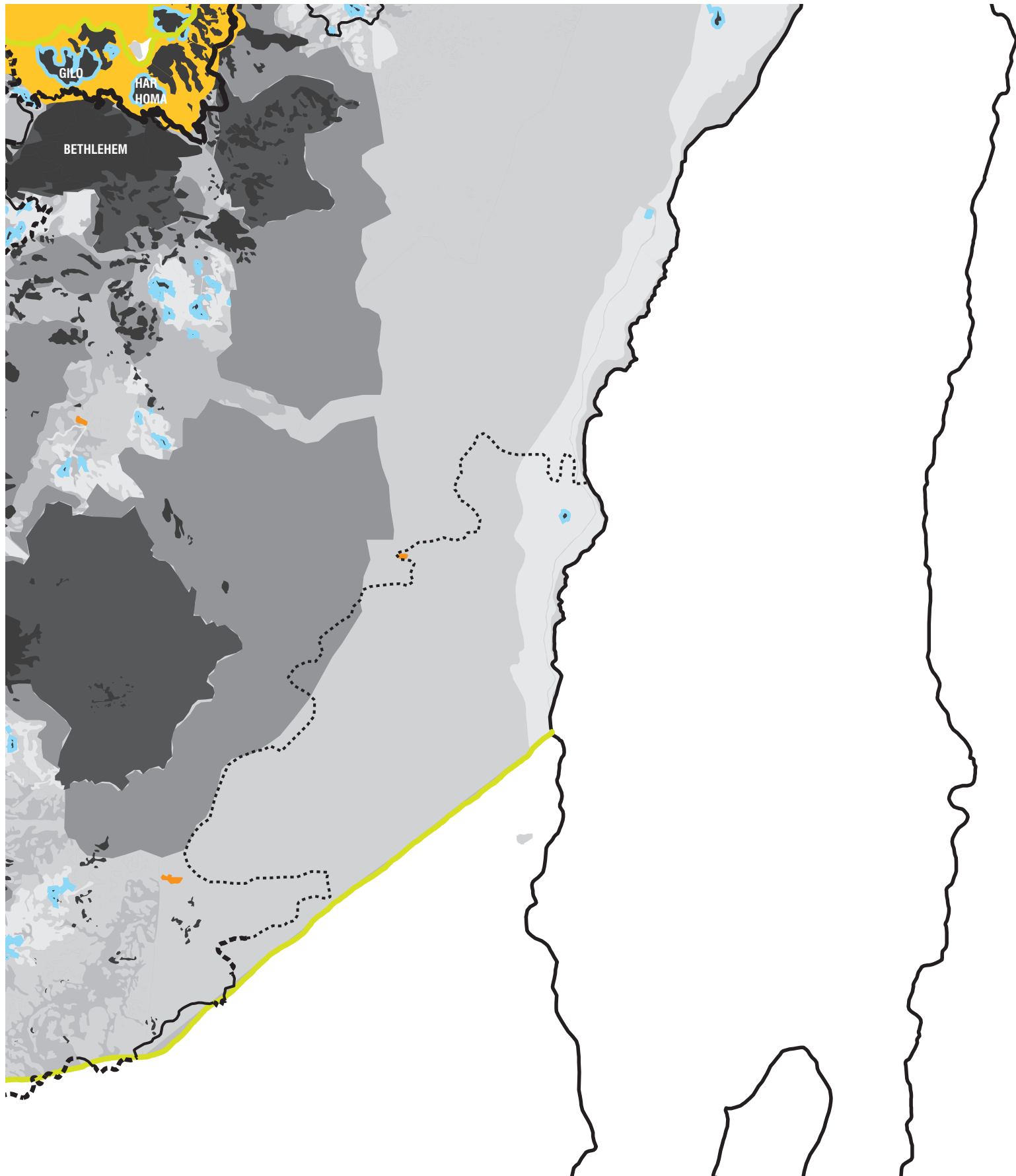








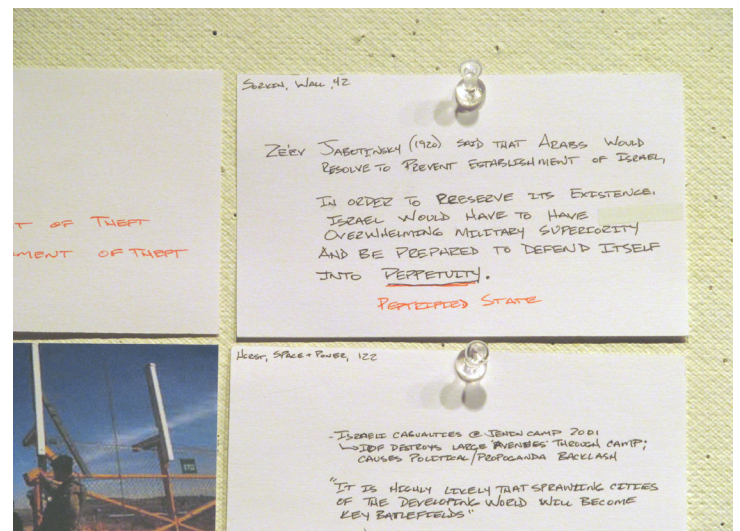
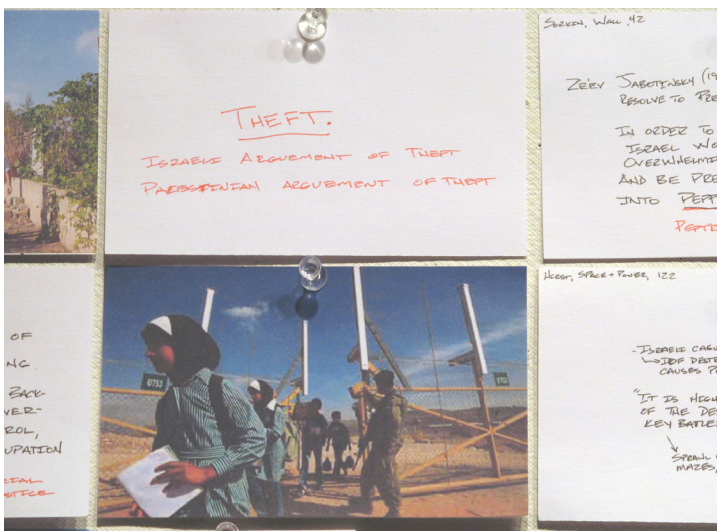


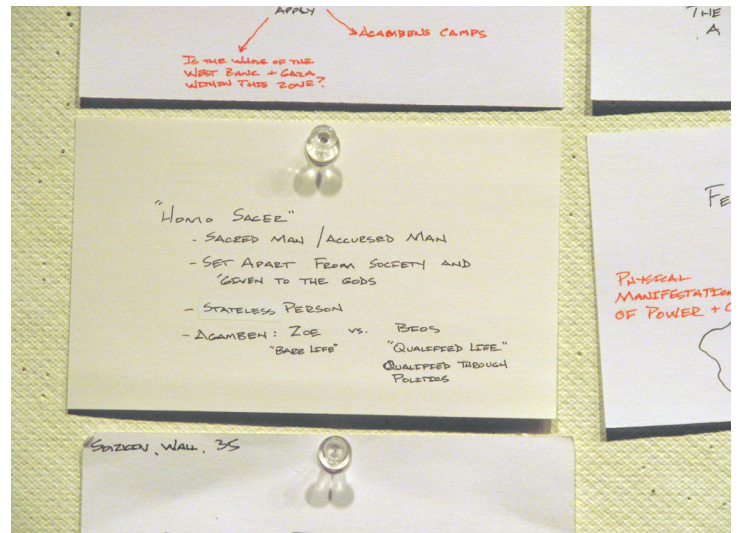


The following pages represent a research investigation from numerous sources pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, sources on the philosophical and sociological consequences of borders and division, as well as records of my own personal observations and experiences in the West Bank. This investigation was an attempt to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the seam zone and border wall as well as define possible design scenarios based on the present situation.

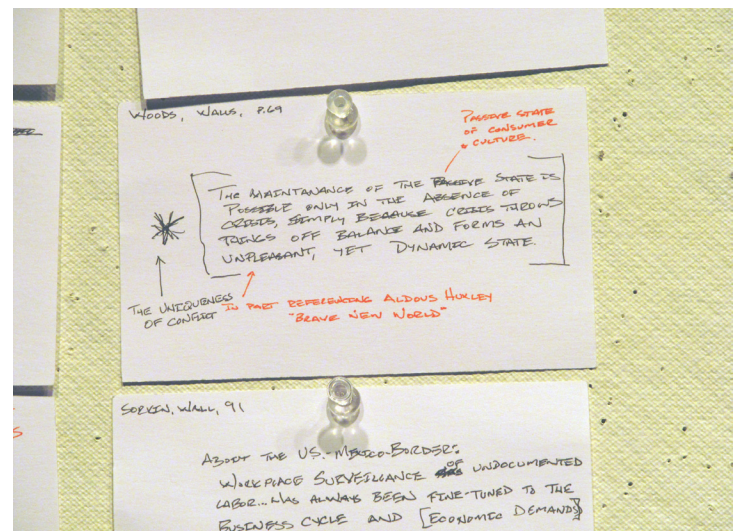
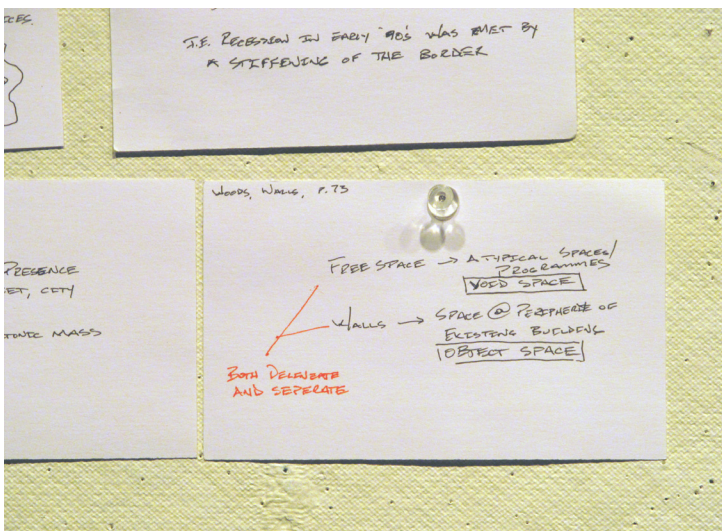
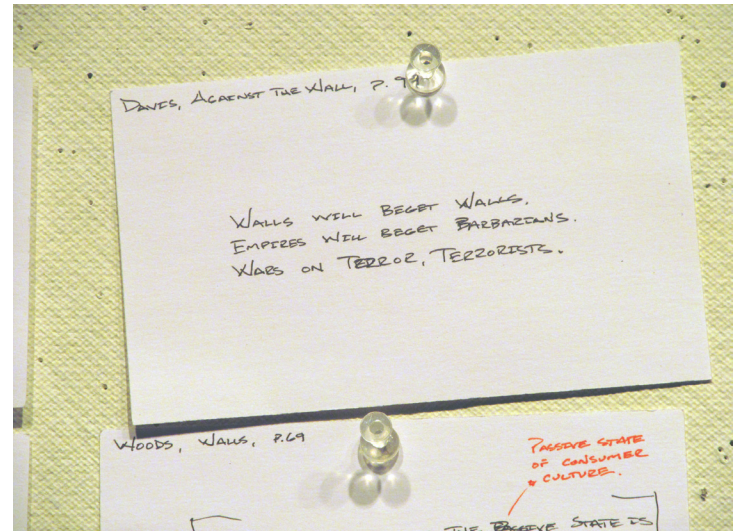
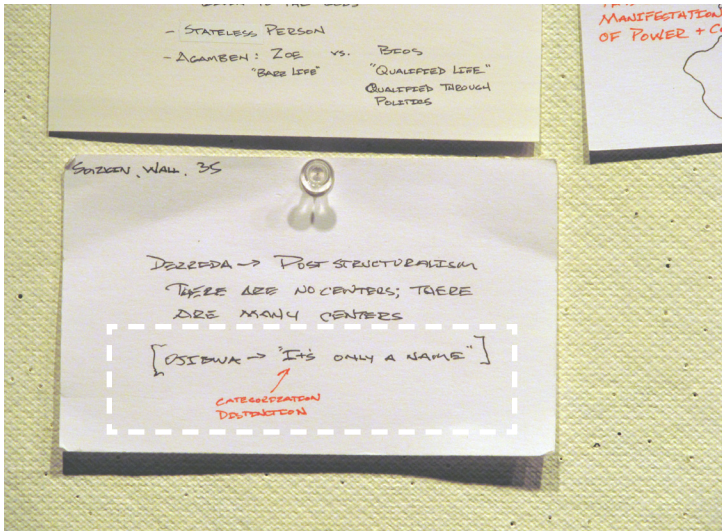
WHY THIS WALL?

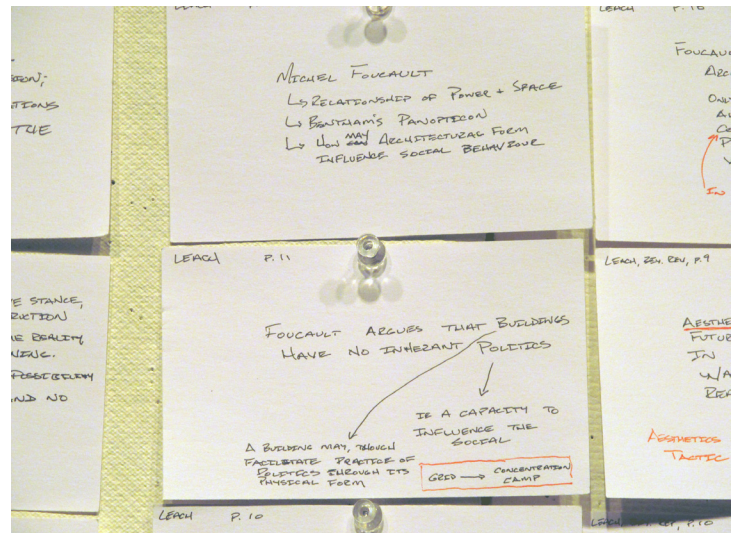
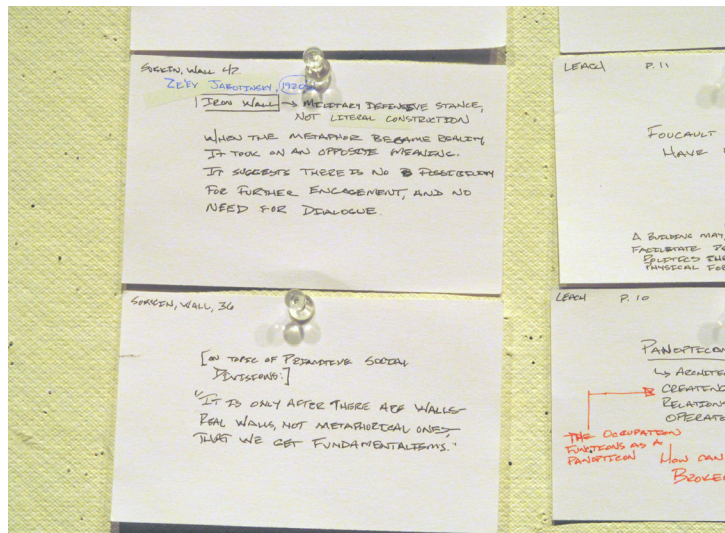
Architecture, represented as an infrastructure of occupation and oppression, has become the background of daily life in the west bank, an ever present reminder of control, dominance, repression and occupation. The wall represents a system of shock and awe, separation and erasure. How can this physical manifestation and power be subverted without delving further towards conflict? Political theorist Zeev Jabotinsky (1920's) said that Arabs would resolve to prevent the establishment of Israel. In order to preserve its existence, Israel would have to have overwhelming military superiority and be prepared to defend itself into perpetuity. This is the foundation of a petrified state.





ORIGIN OF DIVISION

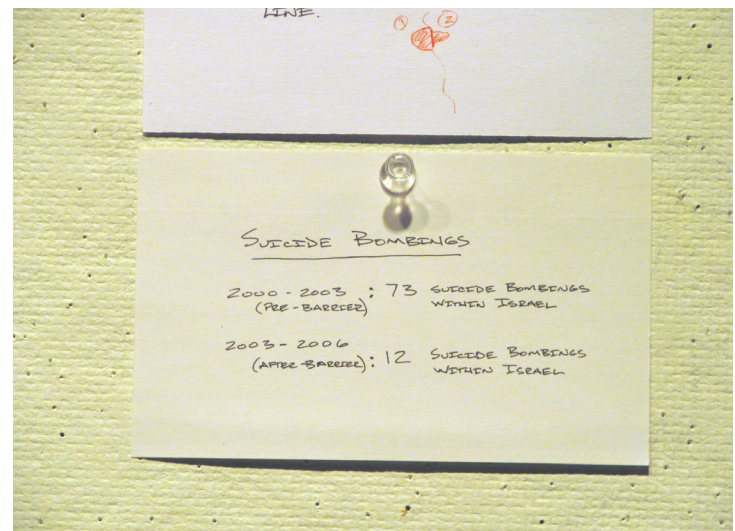
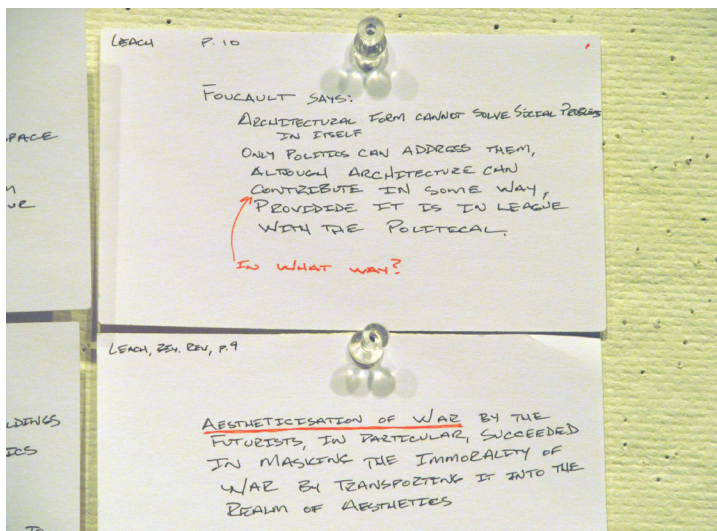
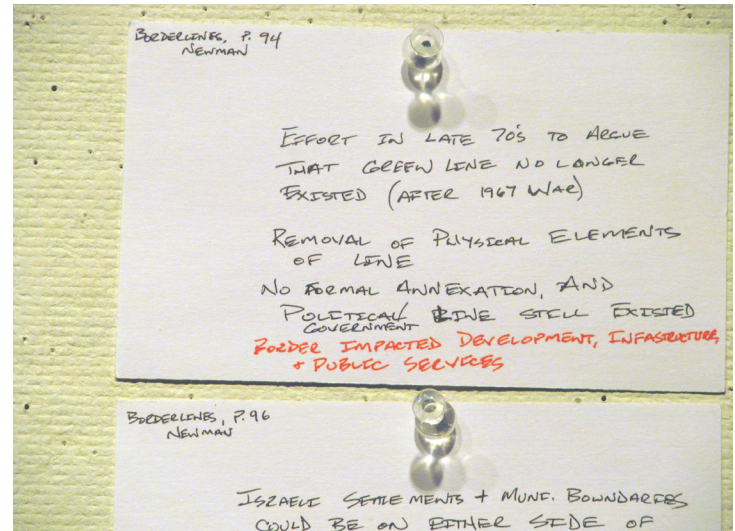
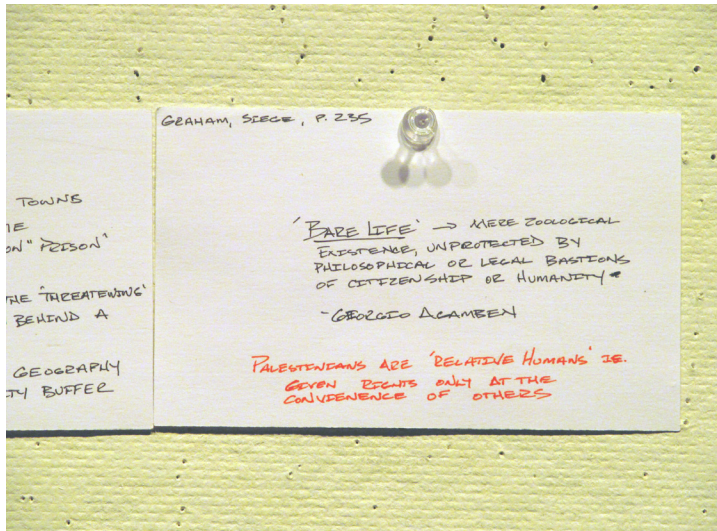


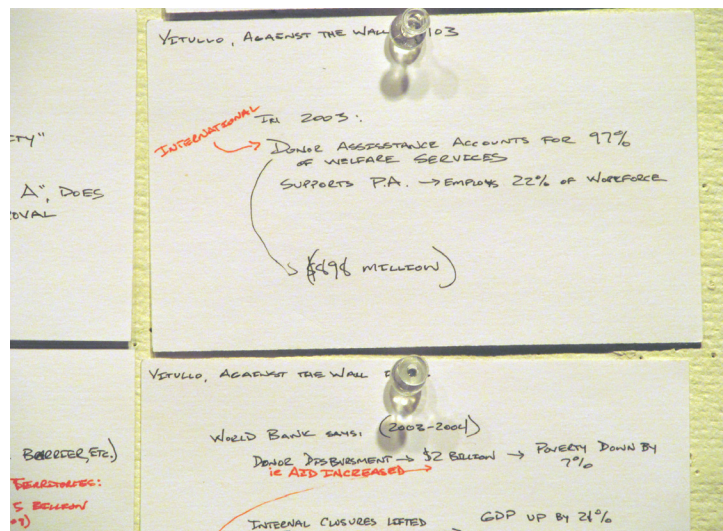
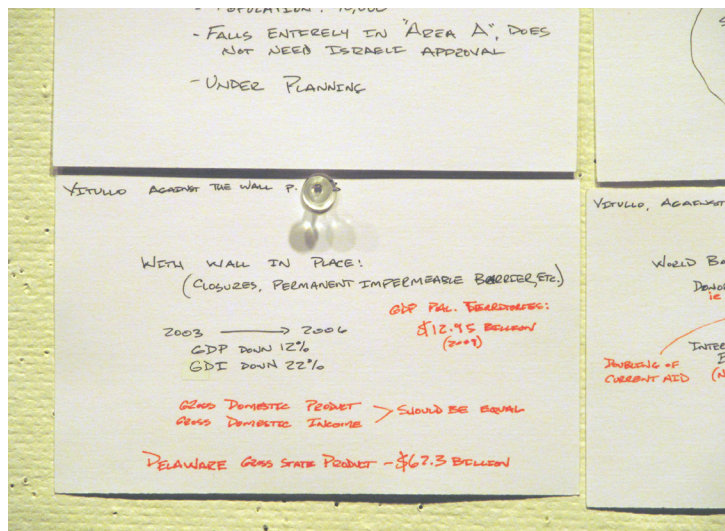


When the metaphor of Jabotinsky's iron wall (a military defensive stance) became manifest as a physical reality it took the opposite meaning. It suggests there is no possibility for further engagement and no need for dialogue across the seam. Michel Foucault says that power and space share a certain relationship, but while architectural form may influence social behavior, buildings do not have inherent politics. Political aims are applied on the architecture through an outside force.

There is a security element to the wall - a correlation with reduced suicide bombings in Israel since the construction of the wall, as well as the establishment of a defined border between Israeli and Palestinian space (though that border is contested).

CONTEXT ISSUES - SOCIAL + SECURITY





CONTEXT ISSUES - ECONOMIC

The wall serves as both a social and economic barrier. All crossing of the seam zone is controlled by Israeli military and police and requires special permits. Transfer of goods and services moving across the wall is also controlled by the occupying force.

WISSEFEDTA

VITULLO, AGADY

UNEMPLOYMENT:

1980's → <5% ↔ CROSS-EMPLOYMENT

MID 1990's → 720% X—X EXTENSIVE CLOSURES

2006 → FROM 23% TO >50% —| WEST-BANK BARRIER

2010 → 25%

PALESTINIAN Economy:

1) AGRICULTURE → PRODUCE, FRUITS

2) STONE CUTTING → JERUSALEM STONE, 6500+ PRODUCERS, 13% IN BET FAYDAL (SOUTH)

—| CAP OIL

GRAHAM, SEEDE, P. 253

ISRAELI ECONOMY BASED ON SECURITY/WAR

- ISRAEL IS 4TH LARGEST ARMS/SECURITY EQUIP. EXPORTER
- SELLS \$1.2 BILLION OF SECURITY PRODUCTS TO US / YEAR
- 2006 ^{US} MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL → \$2.3 BILLION
- ECONOMIC AID → \$240 MILLION

—| TODAY

- SUCH A VARIETY OF WAYS IN WHICH EVERYDAY SPACES + INFRASTRUCTURES OF CITIES CAN BE DEEMED INSECURE, ANY HIGH-TECH COMPANY CAN 'SELL' ITSELF AS A 'SECURITY' COMPANY

BREXERWES, P. 96

NEWMAN

GREEN LINE WAS A POINT OF DISCONTINUITY ON THE DISTANCE-DECAY-EFFECT

VITULLO, AGADY, THE WALL, P. 101

BEFORE WALL →

- ~120,000 JERUSALEM DAY LABORERS IN ISRAEL
- ~120,000 PERMITTED LABORERS (PALESTINIANS)
- BENEFIT TO ISRAELI + PALESTINE ECONOMIES
- PALESTINIANS USED LABOR STREIKS IN WEST JERUSALEM

VITULLO, AGADY, THE WALL, P. 101

FIRST GULF WAR

- REGION-WIDE CURFEWS ON PALESTINIANS
- ISRAELI ARO. + CONST. INDUSTRIES SLOW
- ISRAELI 'IMPORTS' 200,000+ S.E. ASIAN

ISRAELI SAYS PALESTINIANS ARE AT ISRAEL

ISRAELI STONE + PRODUCES IN BET FAYDAL (SOUTH)

VERY DOWN BY 70%

BY 21% AND 15%

AGAINST THE WALL, P. 101

ISRAELI BUYS/BUILDS WEAPONS

LAUNCH COUNTER MEASURES ATTACKS

TARGETED ATTACK ON PALESTINIAN STRUCTURES

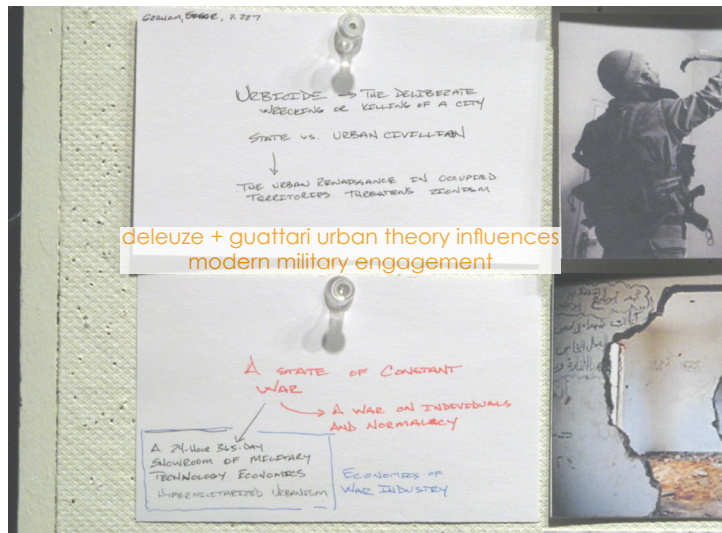
DISRUPTION OF MATERIAL GOODS

PALESTINIANS REBUILD (LOCAL LABOR)

THE REASON FOR CONSTRUCTION IS CONTINUAL DESTRUCTION

COST OF WALL CONSTRUCTION

\$3.4 BILLION... (AND COUNTING)



deleuze + guattari urban theory influences modern military engagement



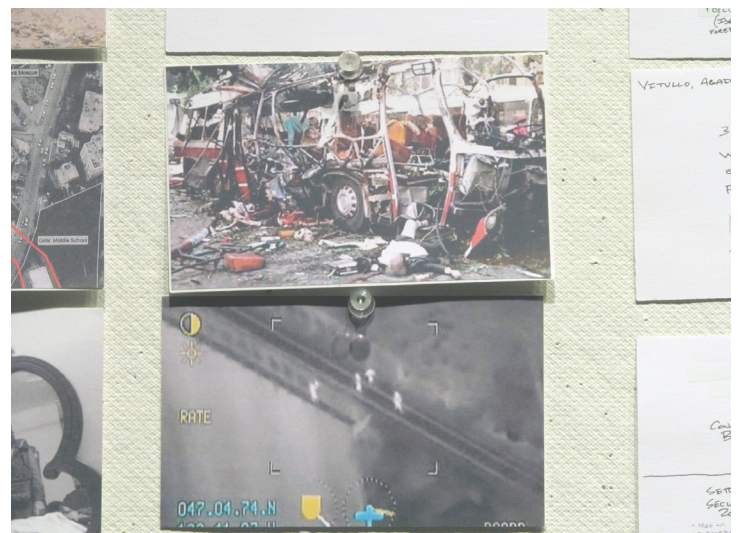
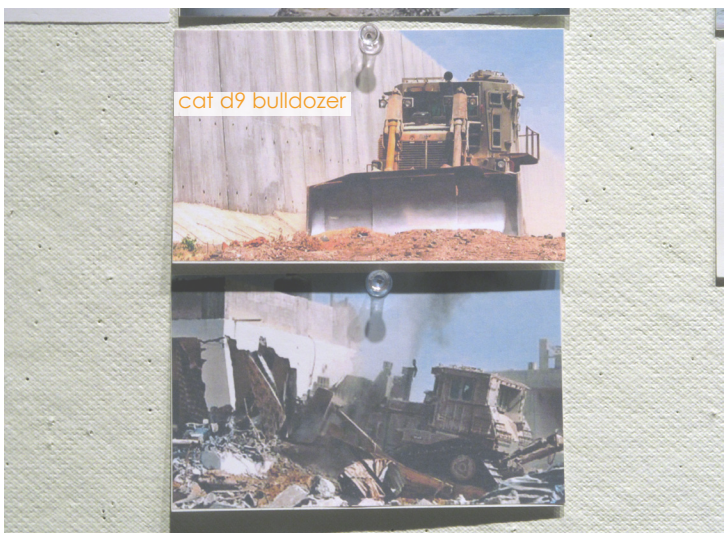
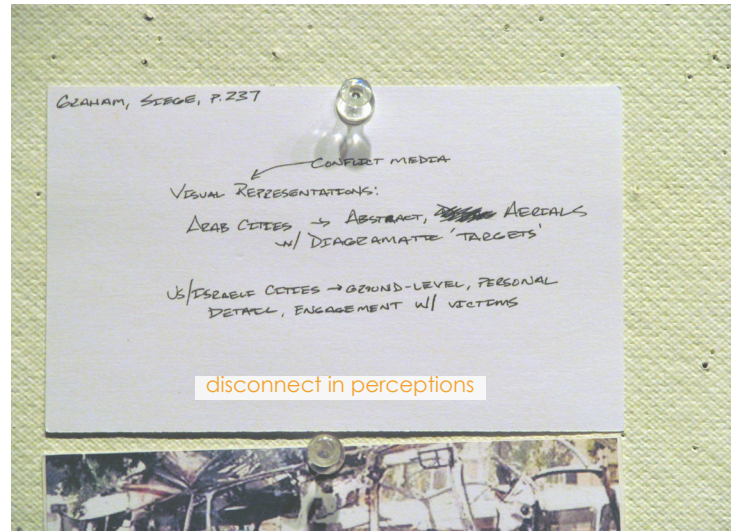
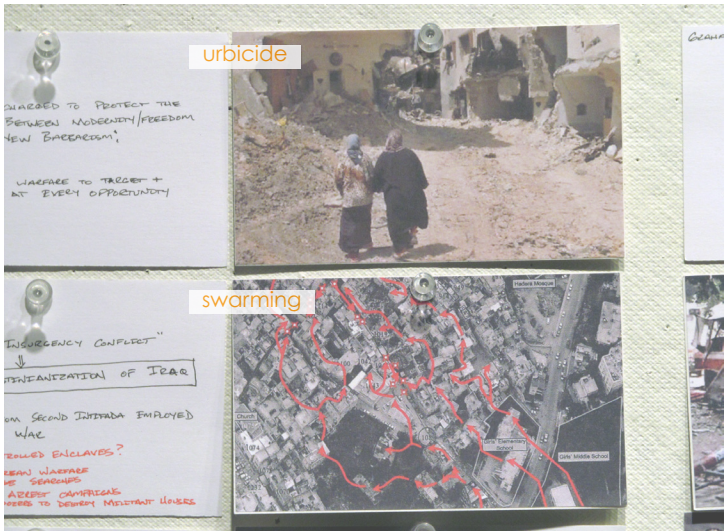
moving through walls

There is a variety of tactics at play within the military occupation of the west bank. Tactics which represent control and observation and a severe imbalance of power.

- Closures
- Checkpoints
- Aerial surveillance
- Precision strikes
- 'Gated' communities
- Bypass routes
- Concrete barriers
- Electric fence

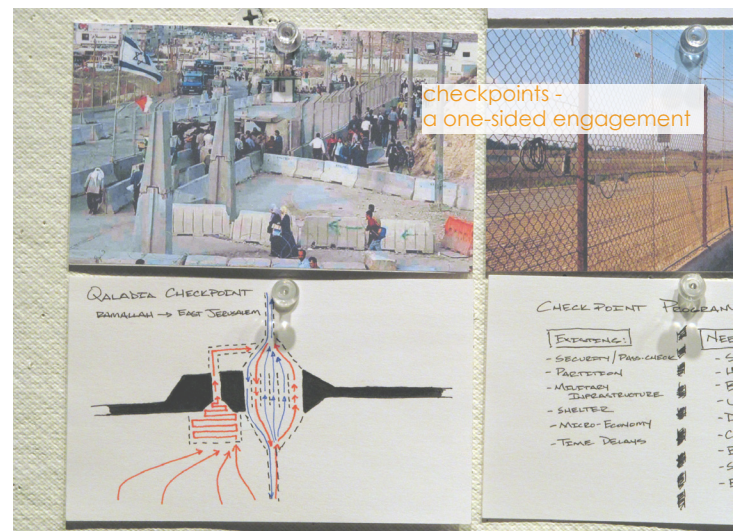
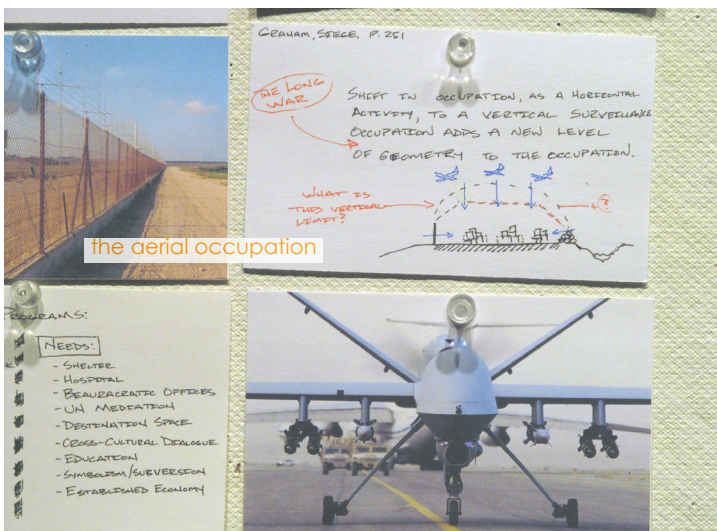
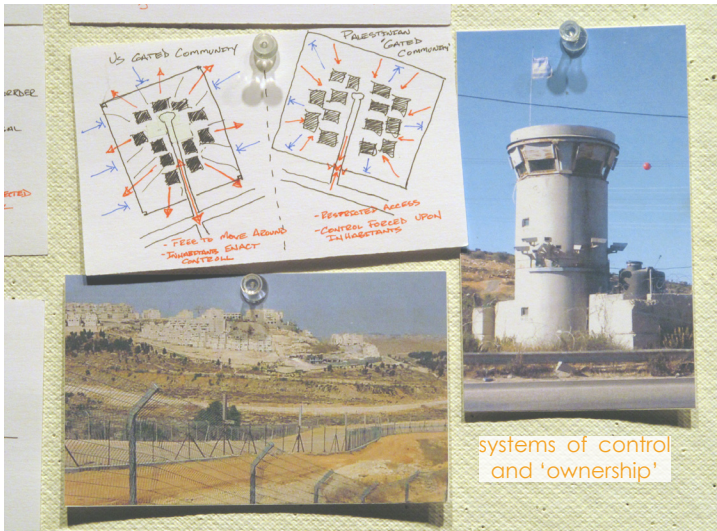
The Israeli Defence Force has pioneered tactics in modern urban combat and occupation. Think tanks have been formed studying the work of Deleuze and Guattari's theories of modern urban experience.

TACTICS - WAR + MEDIA



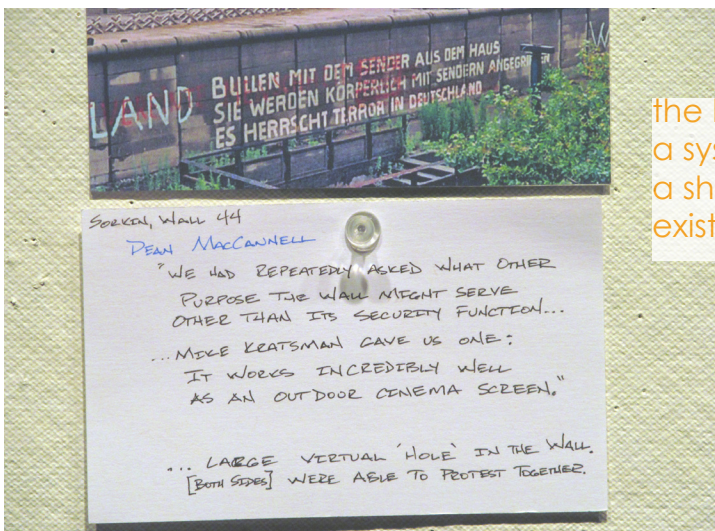
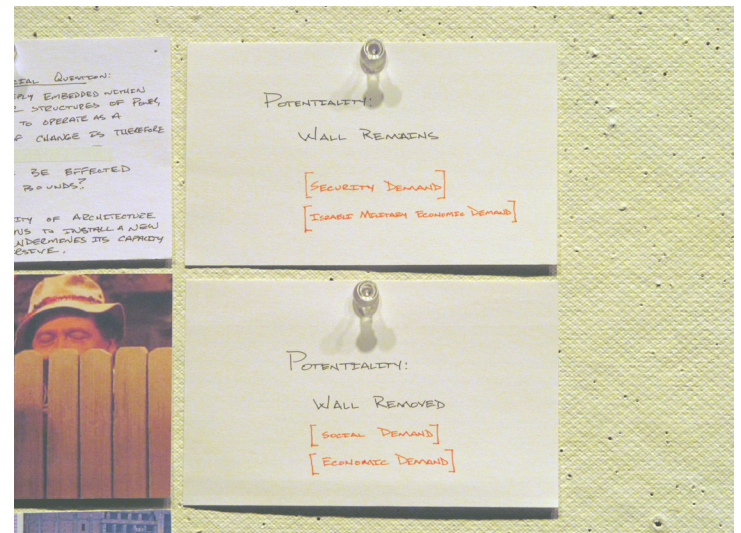
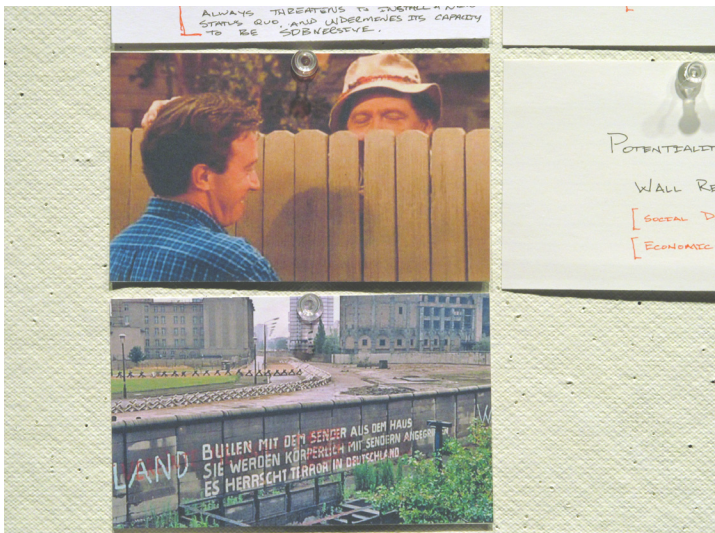
TACTICS - OCCUPATION

The work of the IDF in the occupation works under a tactic of subversion of the urban fabric. Streets and doors are no longer used, as they are zones of exposure. Instead new routes of movement are punched through the walls, from house to house destroying the traditional understanding of urban space.



WHAT HAPPENS?

Neil Leach defines that architecture faces a special concern: architecture is deeply embedded within the economic and social structures of power, and its capacity to operate as a critical force of change is therefore compromised. How can change be effected within this situation, when the very physicality of architecture threatens to install a new status quo? The obvious scenarios put forward by the situational influences create two potentialities: the wall is removed (responding to a social and economic demand) or the wall remains (responding to a security demand). These two polar scenarios look past to opportunity of the wall as a spatial and social definer. There are both costs and benefits to the current situation of the wall. Is there a third potentiality that creates a new space? A space that bridges the divide of the wall and creates a new engagement and opportunity across it?



the barrier is primarily
a system of erasure,
a shroud of what
exists beyond

CONCEPTUAL SCENARIOS

The conclusion of this research exercise, as well as the consideration of various architectural and conceptual projects, resulted in the formation of four possible scenarios of how design might affect the conflict and the seam condition.

- _Second [Palestine] Life
- _City of Nakatomi Space
- _The Cellular Seam Zone
- _Jerusalem Transit Terminal

Each of these scenario proposals represents nearly a brief conceptual idea rather than an actual proposed and resolved project. These formed the beginning of the use of narrative to explore the conflict: in a struggle which is so entangled and emotional can narrative design be used to create a specific situation to work within that is based on the current issues. Though none of these scenarios were directly developed further, ideas and aspects of their representative concepts continue to reappear later in the year as the thesis and design concept continued to evolve.

LEACH, BEYOND REV. P. 4

1922

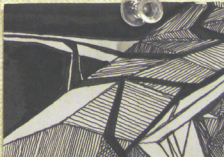
LE CHESBRE SPARK OF AVOIDING POLITICAL REVOLUTION NOT BECAUSE HE WAS OPPOSED TO THE CONCEPT OF REVOLUTION, BUT RATHER BECAUSE HE RECOGNIZED IN ARCHITECTURE THE POSSIBILITY OF A "REVOLUTION" THAT WOULD GO BEYOND THE POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SPACES ARE MOST REVOLUTIONARY ACT.

LEACH, BEY. REV. P. 4

1978

HERBERT MARCUSE → ART AS A POTENTIAL CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

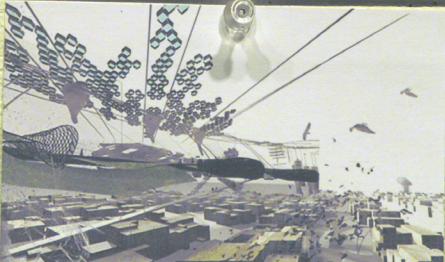
ART CAN REPRESENT THE 'PREVAILING UNFREEDOM' AND CAN THEREFORE BREAK THROUGH 'THE MYSTIFIED (AND PERCEIVED) SOCIAL REALITY'



NASA, SPACES, P. 17

THE OPEN-ENDEDNESS OF ARCHITECTURAL PROJECTS WITHOUT EXTERNAL PARAMETERS HAS ITS OWN IMPLICIT CHALLENGES - HOW CAN DESIGN QUESTION SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS WITHOUT RESORTING TO THE SAME OLD ANSWERS THE SAME OLD BUILDING PROGRAMS?

INTENSIVE
SEVE,
E ECONOMIC
TIME:)
VEN



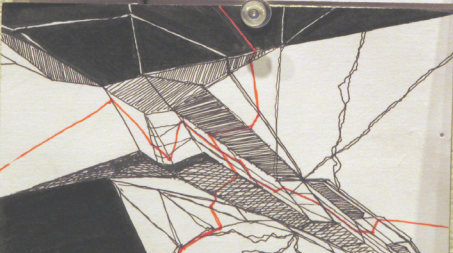
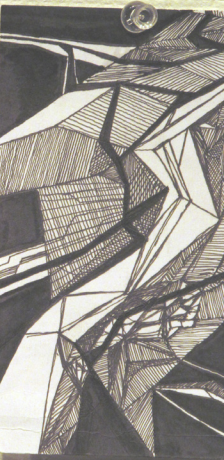
LEACH, BEY. REV. P. 4

1978

HERBERT MARCUSE → ART AS A POTENTIAL CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

ART CAN REPRESENT THE 'PREVAILING UNFREEDOM' AND CAN THEREFORE BREAK THROUGH 'THE MYSTIFIED (AND PERCEIVED) SOCIAL REALITY'

THIS IS WHAT WHISKY PROJECTS WORK WITHIN → PROTECTIVE IDEATION



NASA, SPACES

THE PROBLEM HAS HOW POLITICAL RES THE

WOODS, WALLS, P. 73

PROJECTS THAT ARE LABOR-INTENSIVE RATHER THAN CAPITAL-INTENSIVE, ARCHITECTURE THAT RESPONDES TO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS (HAVANA, SARJEVO, [PALESTINE])

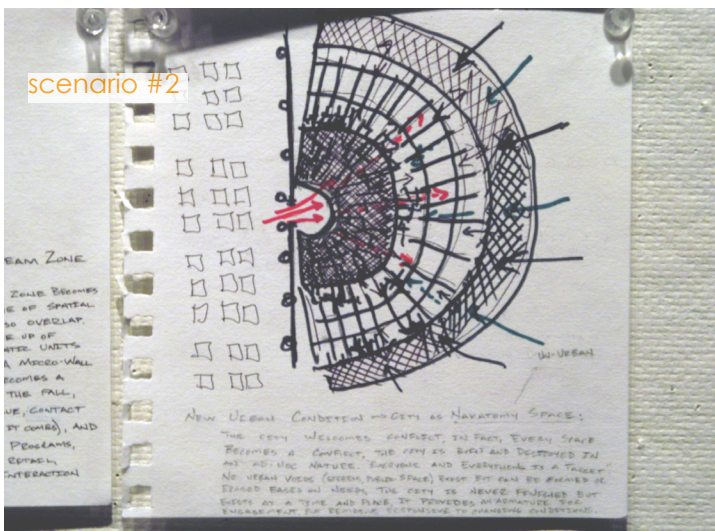
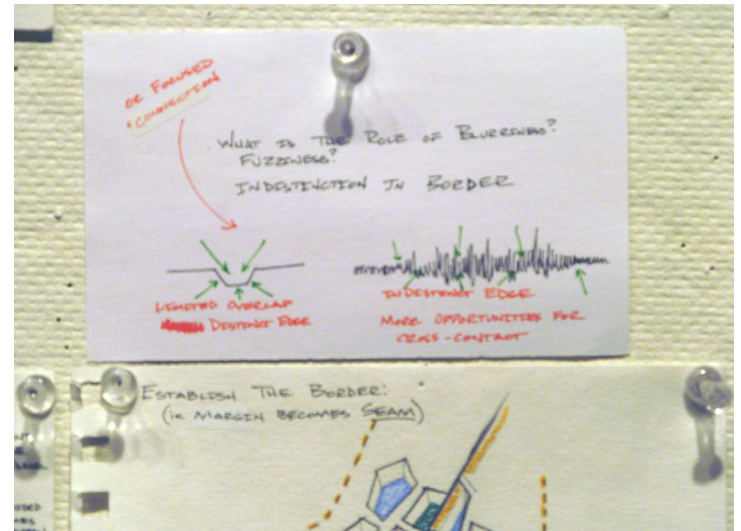
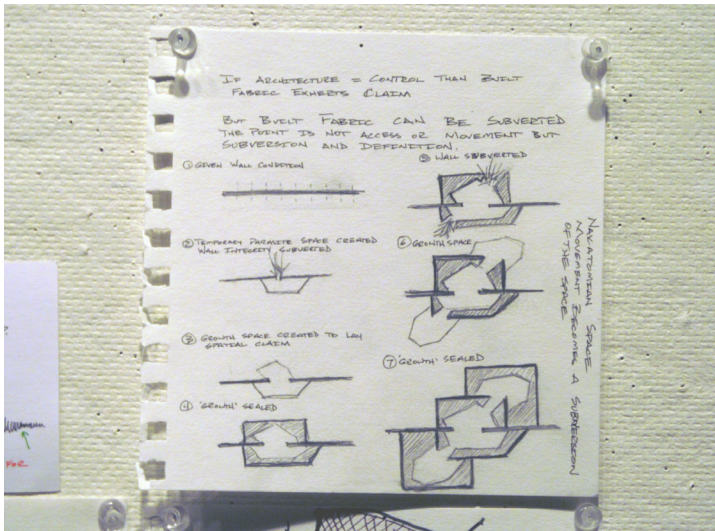
ACTIVITY RATHER THAN PASSIVENESS

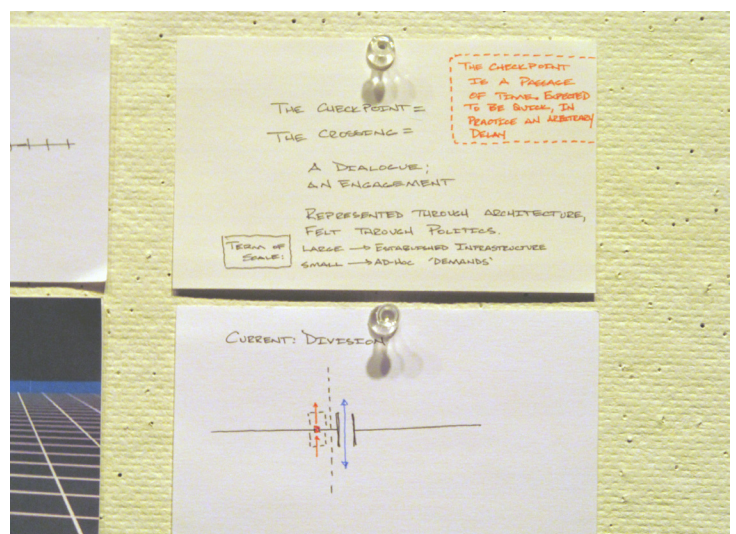
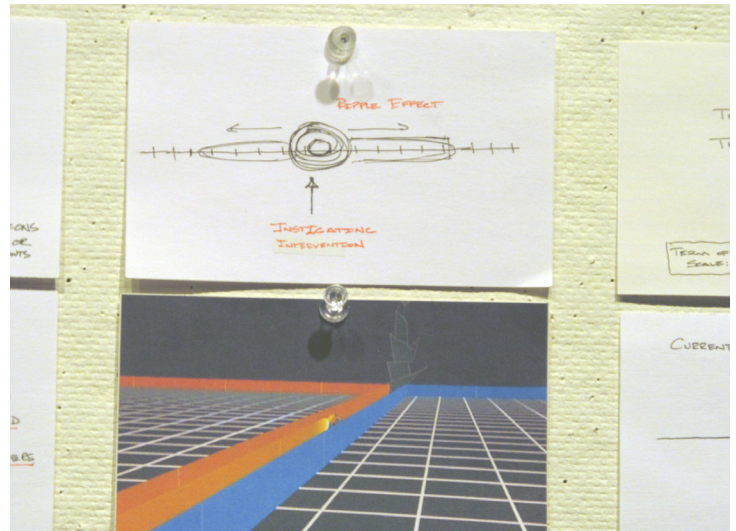



scenario #1

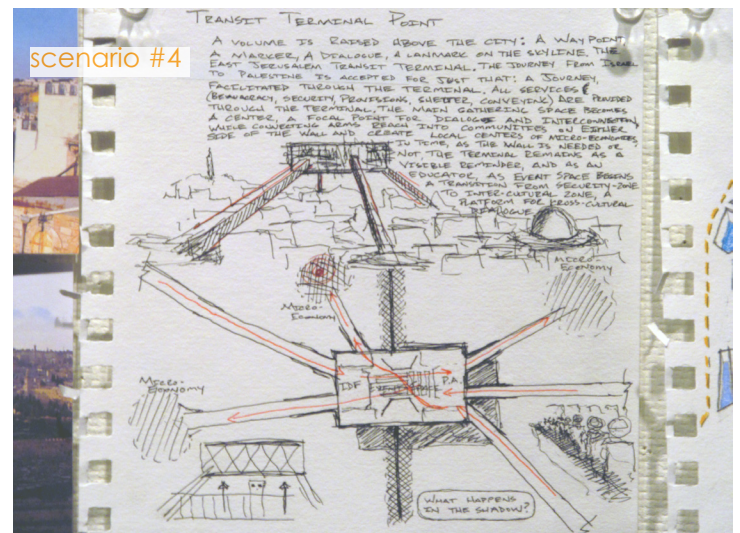
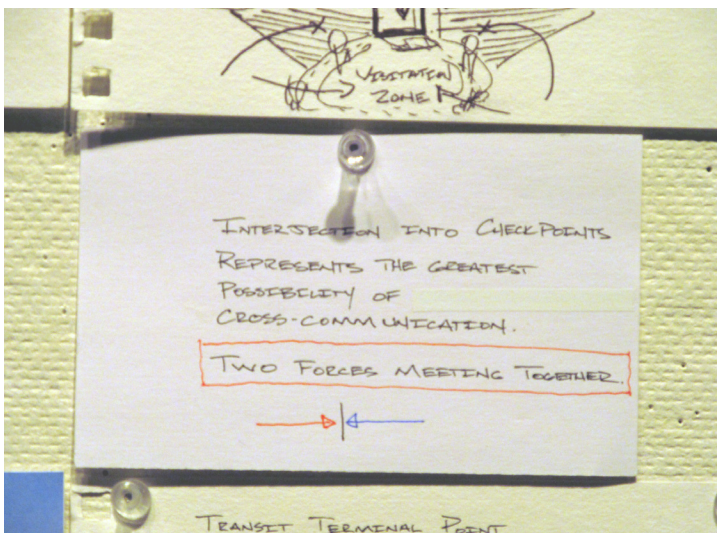
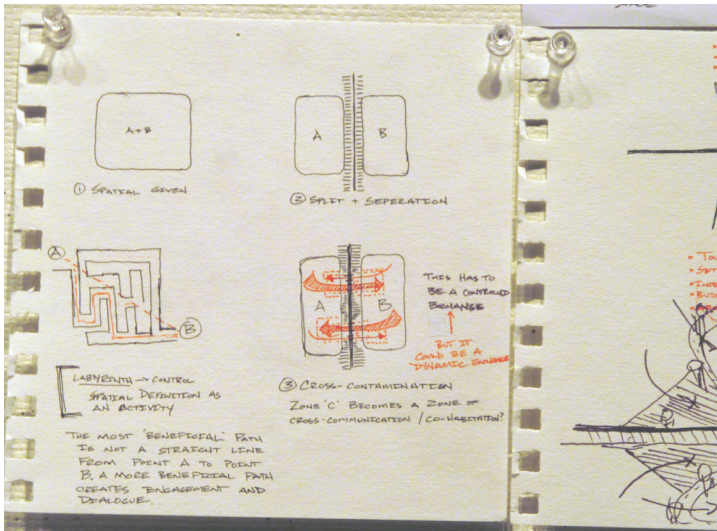


54





CONCEPTUAL SCENARIOS







INTO THE SEAM

The research phase of the first semester culminated in the writing and illustration of an architectural-based graphic narrative entitled "*Into the Seam*." This graphic served as a way to begin to compile both a spatial and graphical understanding of the conflict based on the research motivators. The narrative - a story of perceptual understanding and dialogue across the seam zone - follows a Palestinian and Israeli as they travel into a fictional spatial condition created within the wall/seam zone. This explores concepts found in the culmination of my research that being the wall as a **perceptual shroud**, and the importance of an **active dialogue**, any dialogue - whether positive or negative, across the seam zone. The wall in its current state resists dialogue. The characters in the narrative act out an attempt to create one such dialogue...

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ARCHITECTURE
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L E A H Y
D E S I G N



\$ 3 . 0 0

DEC 2011
VOL #1

INTO THE SEAM

AN ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVE
STORY AND ARTWORK BY ERIK LEAHY

ISRAEL-PALESTINE...

THE HOLY LAND...

**A CONFLICT HAS BEEN
RAGING FOR MILLENIA...**

**A CONFLICT WHICH
POSES RELIGIONS AND
CULTURES AGAINST
EACH OTHER IN A
BATTLE FOR AN ARID,
ROCKY CORNER OF THE
WORLD...**

THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION...

LANDSAT SURVEILLANCE
EST 0533
11-26-2011
14:30 GMT

SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE...

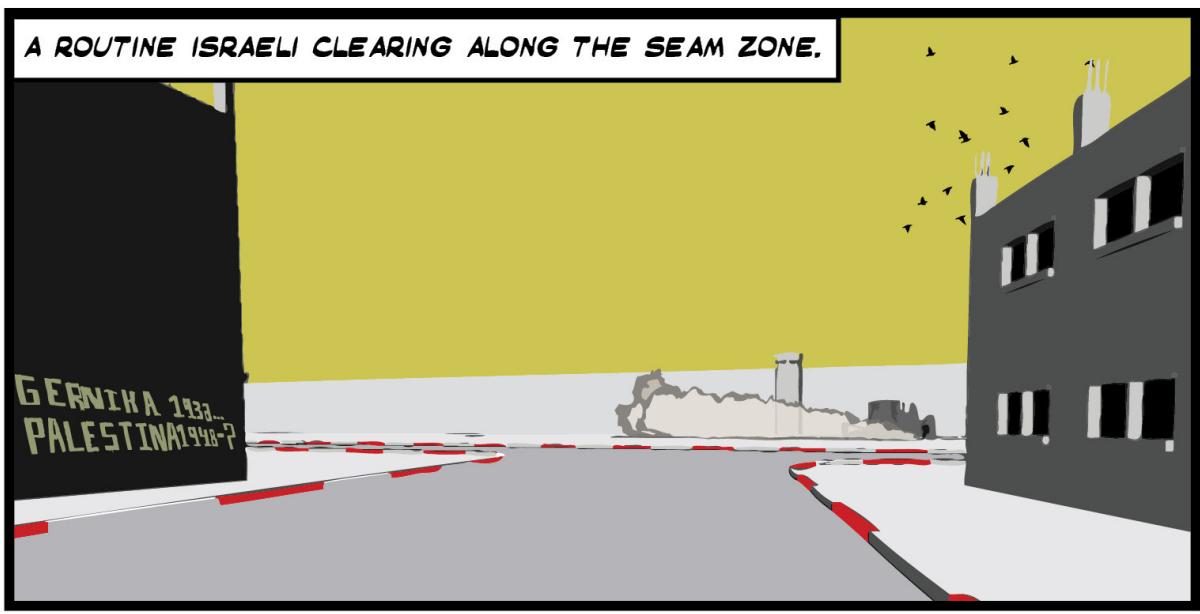
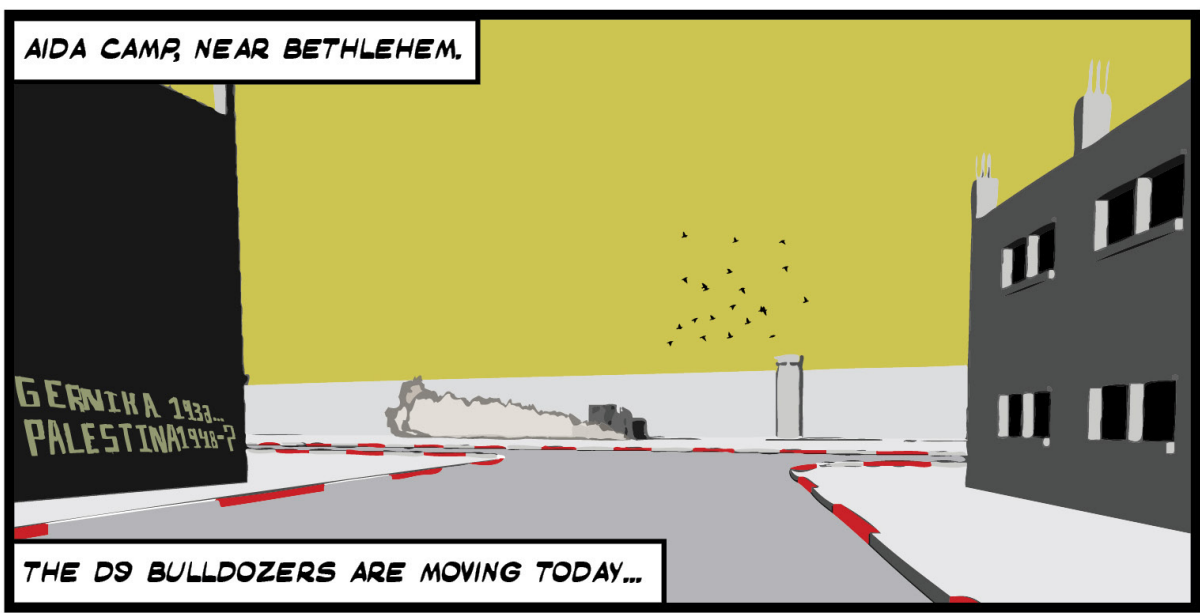
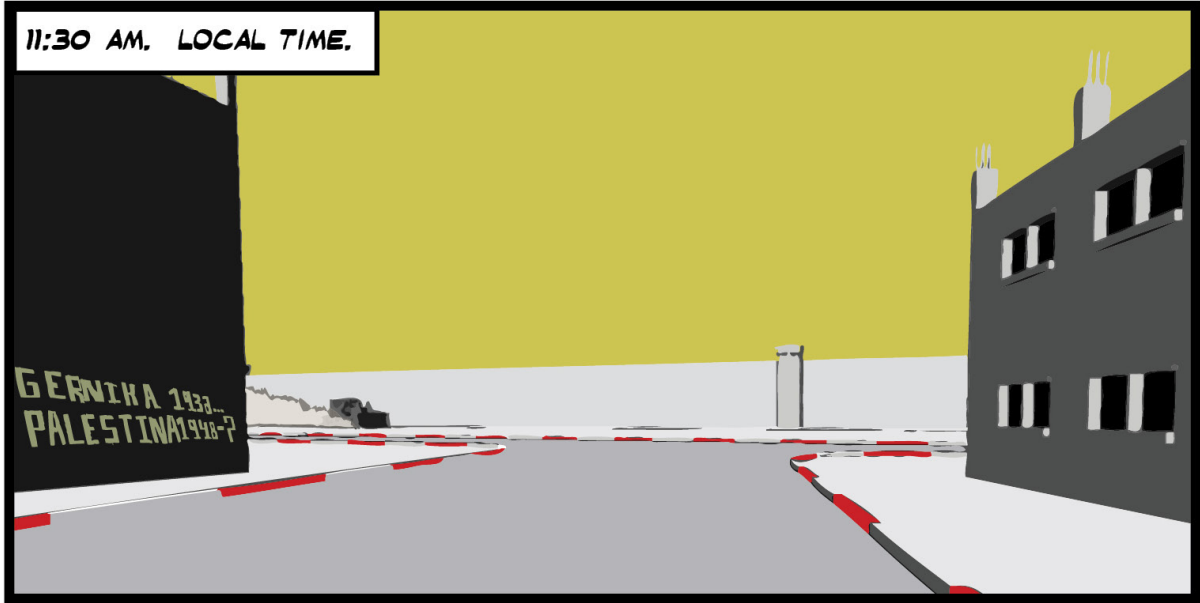
JERUSALEM REGION.

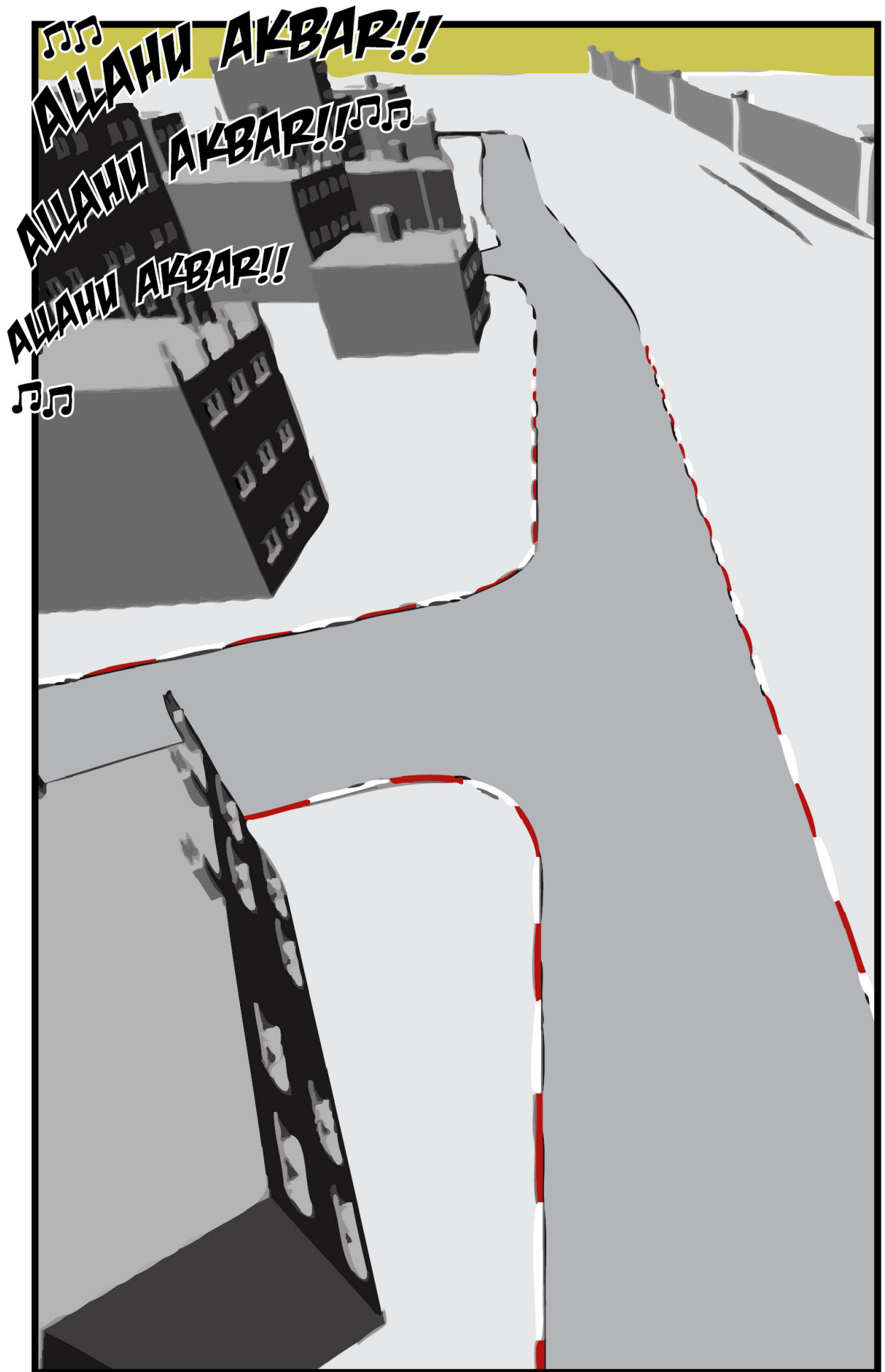
BETHLEHEM.

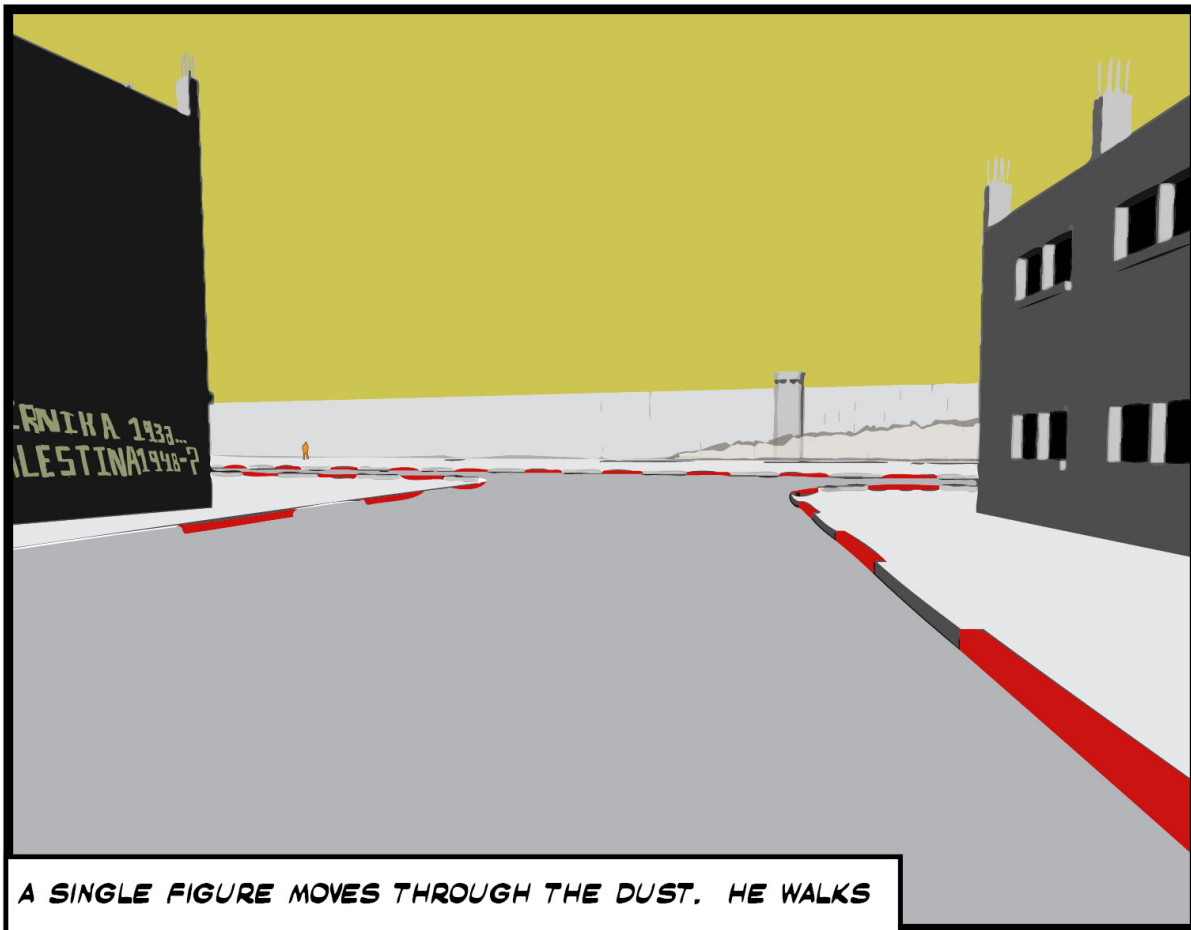
**ALONG THE SEAM BETWEEN ISRAEL
AND THE WEST BANK.**

31°42'11"N
35°11'44"E

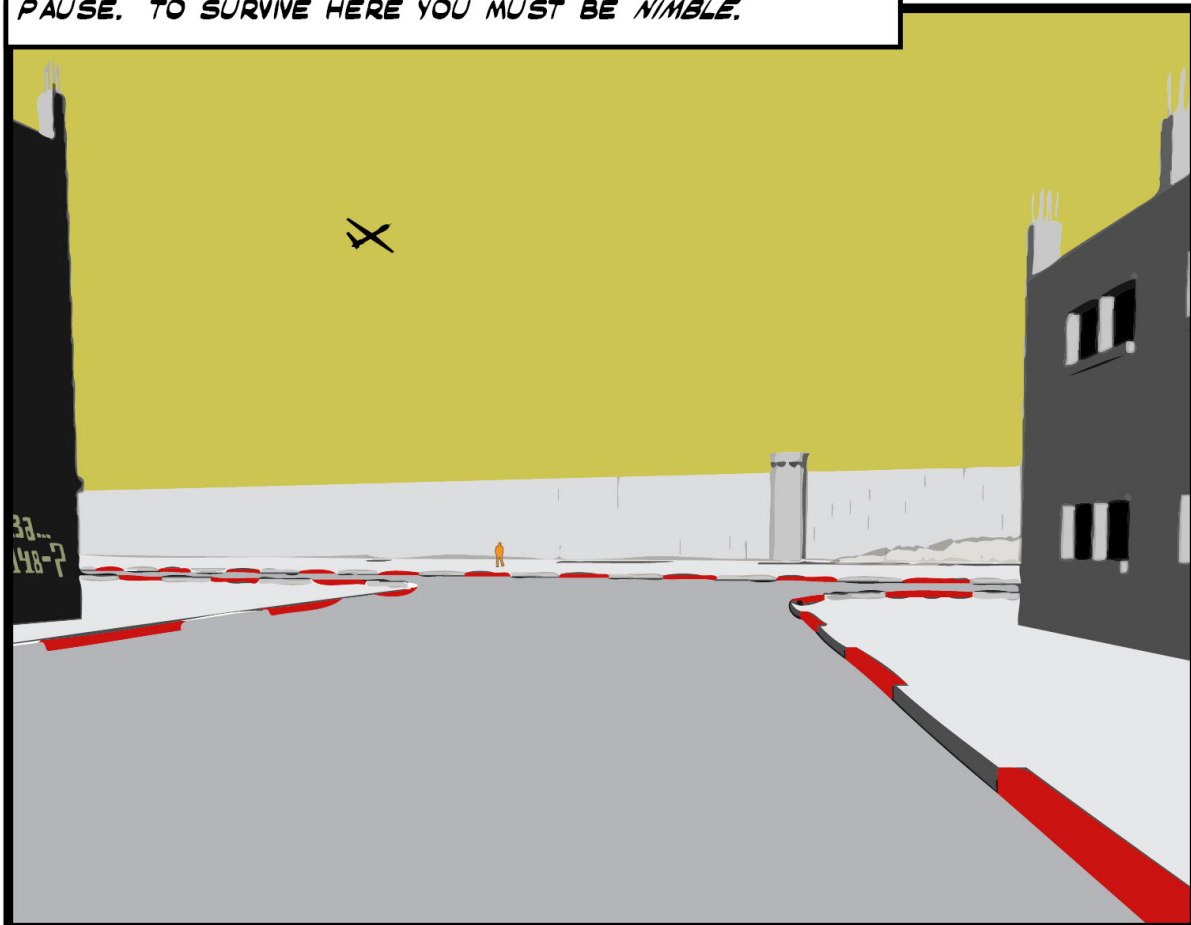
**IN 2004 A WALL WAS BUILT BETWEEN TWO NEIGHBORS. NOT THE
WHITE PICKET FENCE OF FRIENDS, BUT THE CONCRETE BARRIERS
OF PRISONS. A WALL OF SEPARATION, OF EXCLUSION:
A SEAM OF ERASURE...**







A SINGLE FIGURE MOVES THROUGH THE DUST. HE WALKS THIS ROUTE DAILY AND A CLEARING IS NO REASON FOR PAUSE. TO SURVIVE HERE YOU MUST BE NIMBLE.



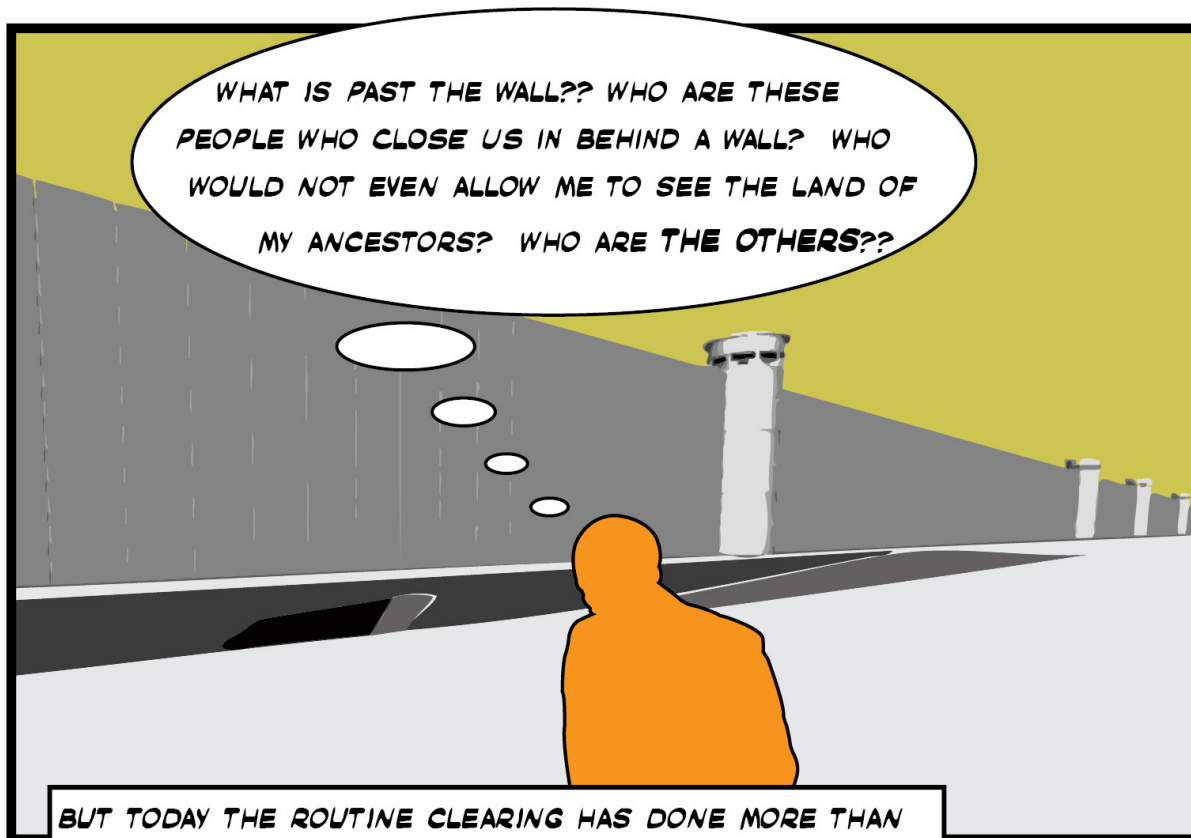
ABU HASSAN. 15 YEARS OLD. BORN IN BETHLEHEM AND RAISED
BESIDE THE WALL. HE DOES NOT REMEMBER A TIME WHEN
PALESTINE WAS NOT OCCUPIED, NOR THE LANDS WEST OF THE WALL,
TAKEN IN THE NAKBA**.



** NAKBA - 'DAY OF THE CATASTROPHE' - THE PALESTINIAN NAME FOR THE
EXPULSION OF PALESTINIANS FOLLOWING THE 1948 CREATION OF ISRAEL .

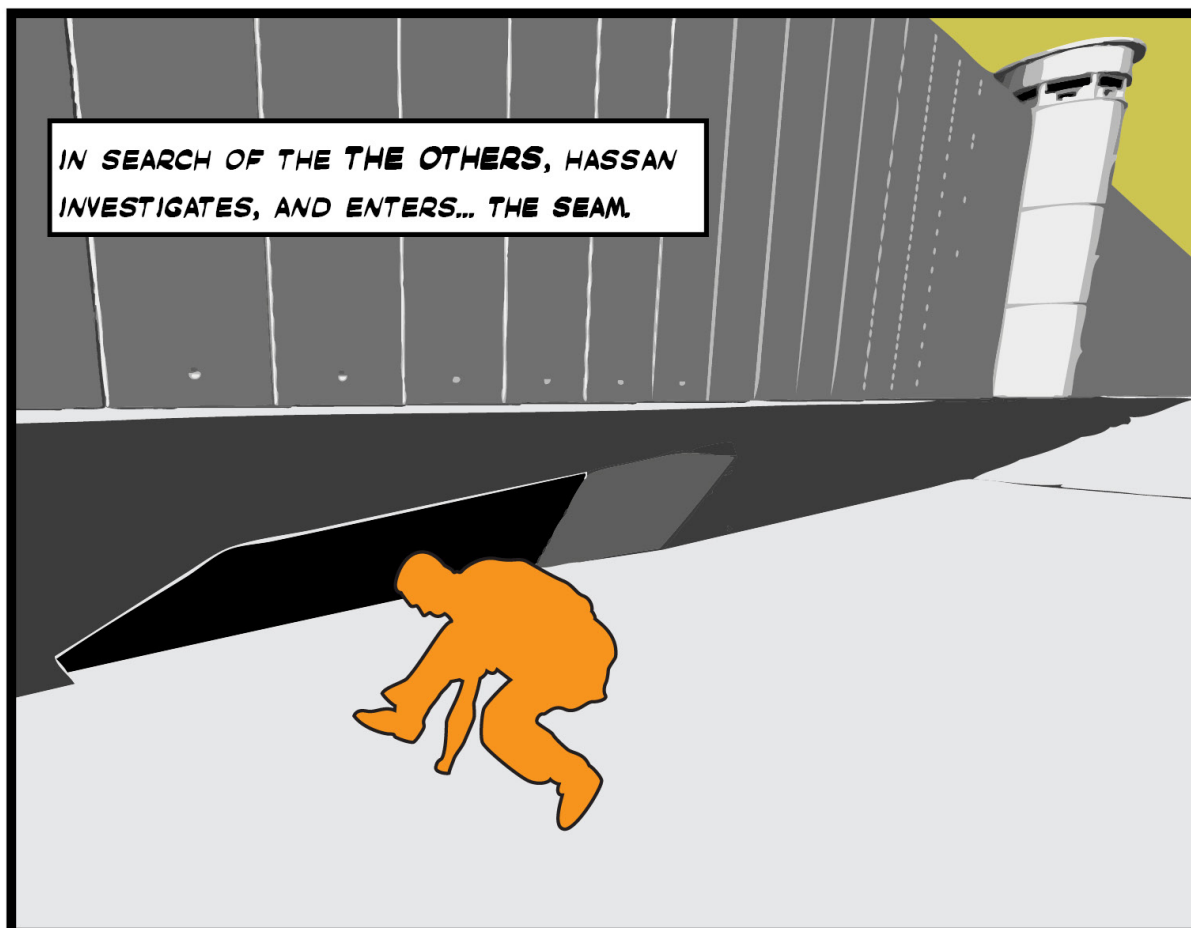
HE WALKS SILENTLY. THE WALL LONG AGO BECAME A
BACKGROUND NOISE TO HIM. DAILY HE PASSES UNDER
THE GAZE OF ITS TOWERS. BUT OCCASIONALLY HE STILL
WONDERS...





WHAT IS PAST THE WALL?? WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE WHO CLOSE US IN BEHIND A WALL? WHO WOULD NOT EVEN ALLOW ME TO SEE THE LAND OF MY ANCESTORS? WHO ARE THE OTHERS??

BUT TODAY THE ROUTINE CLEARING HAS DONE MORE THAN WIPE AWAY THE EVIDENCE OF PALESTINIAN LAND... IT CUT INTO THE BARRIER ITSELF... A SLIPPAGE UNDER THE WALL.

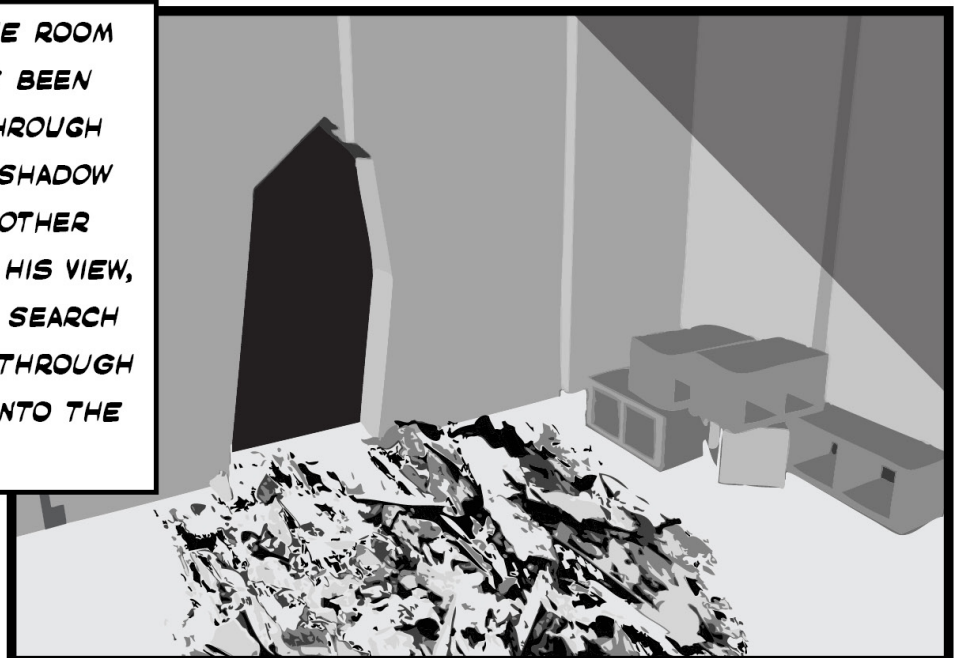


IN SEARCH OF THE THE OTHERS, HASSAN INVESTIGATES, AND ENTERS... THE SEAM.

WHAT EXISTS BEYOND, THOUGH, IS NOT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL, THE LAND OF ISRAEL. WHAT HE FINDS IS A ROOM, A SPACE, MARKED AND SCARRED WITH THE SIGNS OF CONFLICT. THERE IS NO PROGRAM OR USE HERE. THE ROOM SEEMS TO EXIST ONLY AS THE EMBODIMENT OF PERCEPTIONS AND FACTS: SOME TRUTHS, SOME LIES.



ACROSS THE ROOM A HOLE HAS BEEN BLASTED THROUGH THE WALL. SHADOW HIDES THE OTHER SIDE FROM HIS VIEW, BUT IN HIS SEARCH FOR A WAY THROUGH HE MOVES INTO THE UNKNOWN.



MEANWHILE...

LEVI COHEN. 16 YEARS OLD. BORN AND RAISED IN ISRAEL, TO PARENTS WHO EMIGRATED FROM EUROPE TO CLAIM A HOME IN THE LAND THAT SET ASIDE FOR THEM. THEY HAVE WORKED HARD TO ESTABLISH THEIR LIFE IN THIS LAND AND SECURE THEIR FUTURE.

"...PALESTINIAN MILITANTS FIRED ROCKETS INTO ASHDOD FOR THE THIRD TIME THIS MONTH..."

"...THE IDF LAUNCHED RETALITORY STRIKES AGAINST SUSPECTED MILITANT LEADERS..."



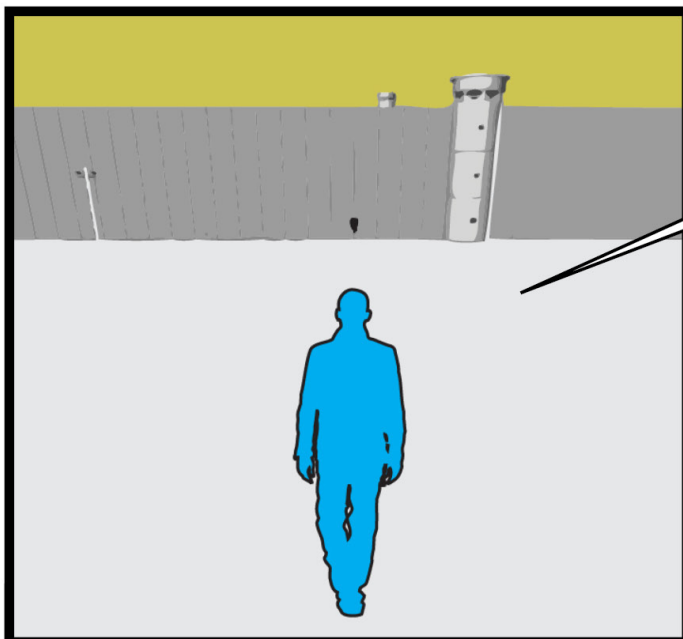
THEIR HOUSE SITS IN THE SHADOW OF THE WALL. IT IS NOT AN IDEAL LOCATION, BUT IT IS CHEAP - THE GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZES THEIR HOUSING IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR OCCUPATION AND CLAIM OF THE SEAM. THEY WOULD BE CHARGED WITH HOLDING THE LINE AGAINST **THE OTHERS** WHO WOULD DRIVE THEM, ONCE AGAIN, FROM THIS LAND THEY HAVE CLAIMED.

"...GAZANS TOOK TO THE
STREETS IN PROTEST..."

THERE, BEYOND THE WALL, ARE MY
NEIGHBORS. HERE I AM, AND THERE THEY ARE,
BEYOND THE WALL. BUT WHO ARE THEY?
I DO NOT KNOW THEM.

THE WALL. THAT IS MY REAL
NEIGHBOR. ALWAYS IT SITS THERE, SILENT.
WHAT EXISTS BEYOND? WHAT IS IT KEEPING
FROM ME?

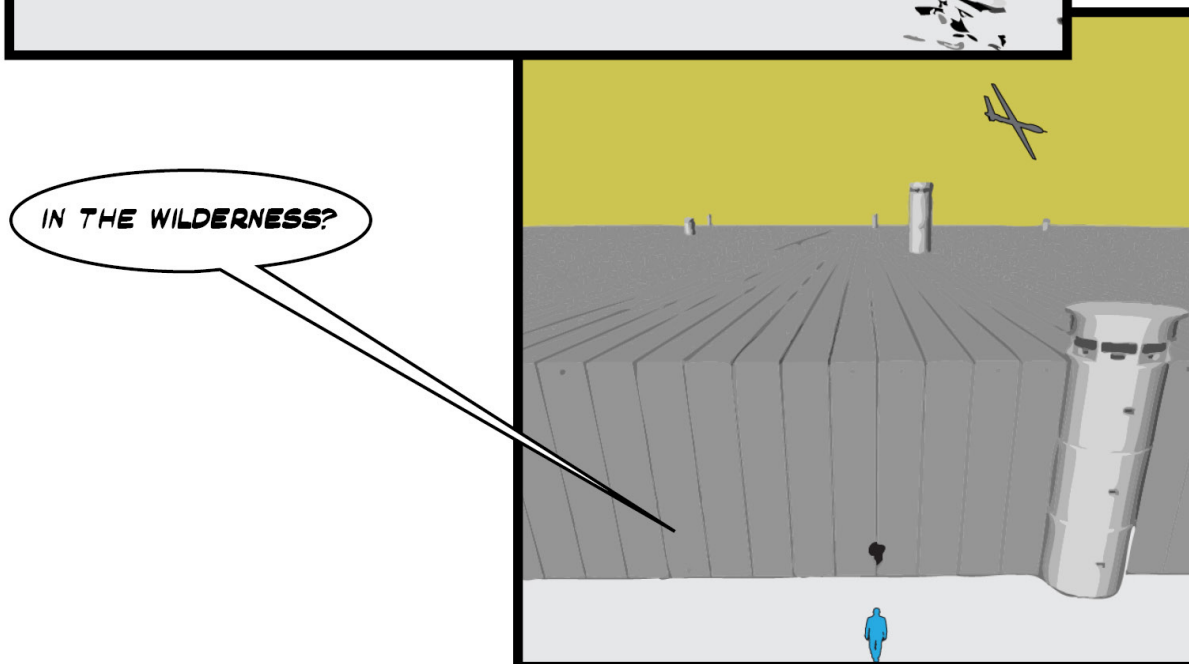




WHAT... WHO EXISTS BEYOND
THE WALL?



THROUGH THE SEAM?



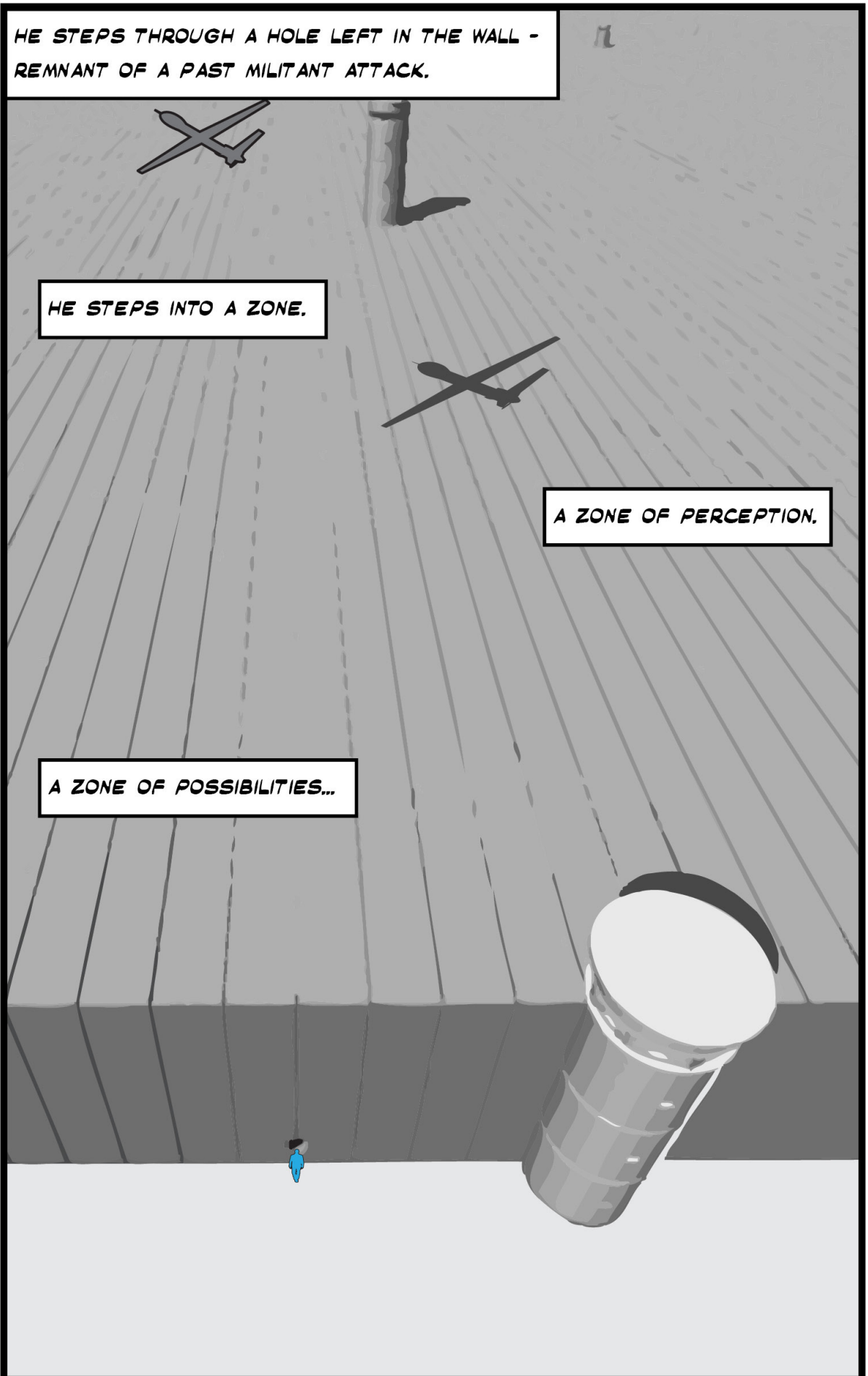
IN THE WILDERNESS?

HE STEPS THROUGH A HOLE LEFT IN THE WALL -
REMNANT OF A PAST MILITANT ATTACK.

HE STEPS INTO A ZONE.

A ZONE OF PERCEPTION.

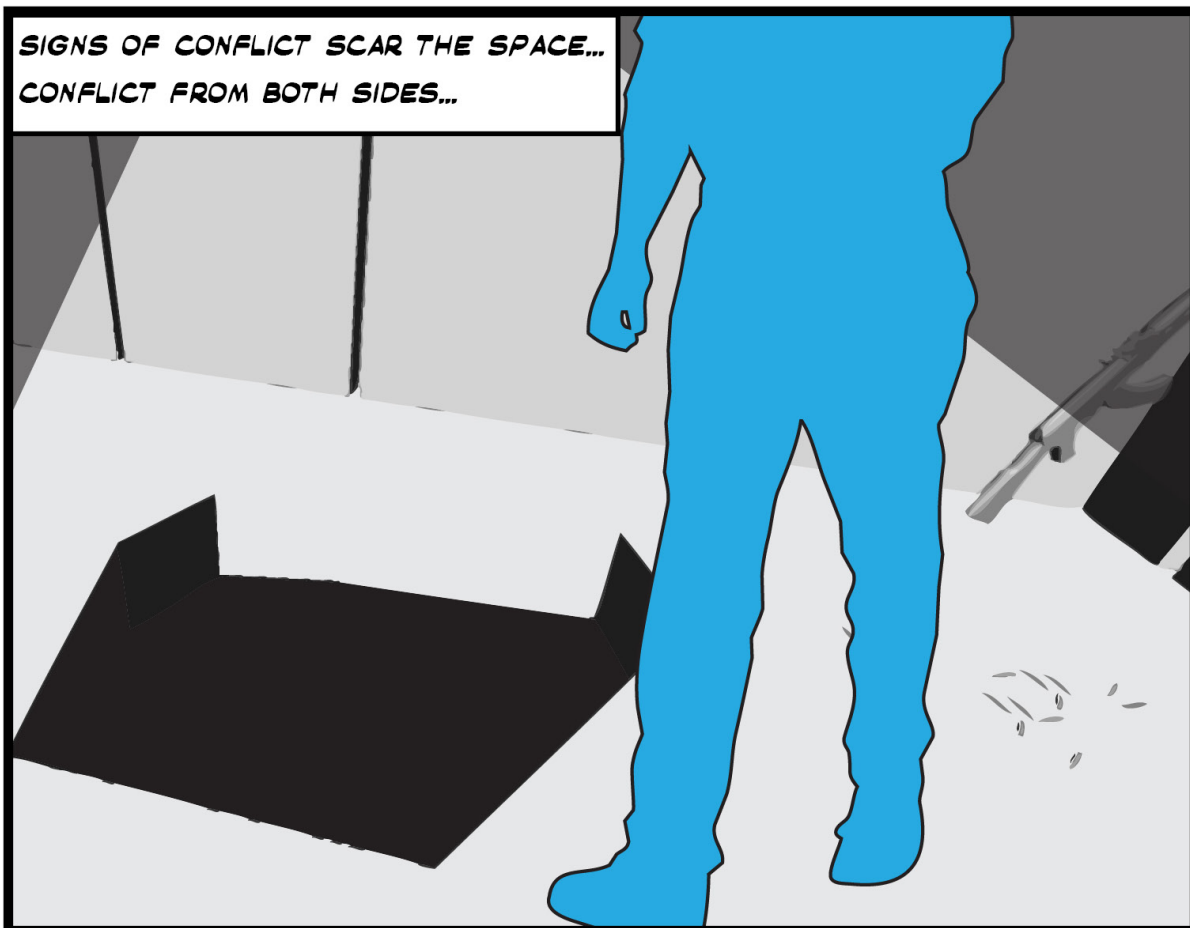
A ZONE OF POSSIBILITIES...



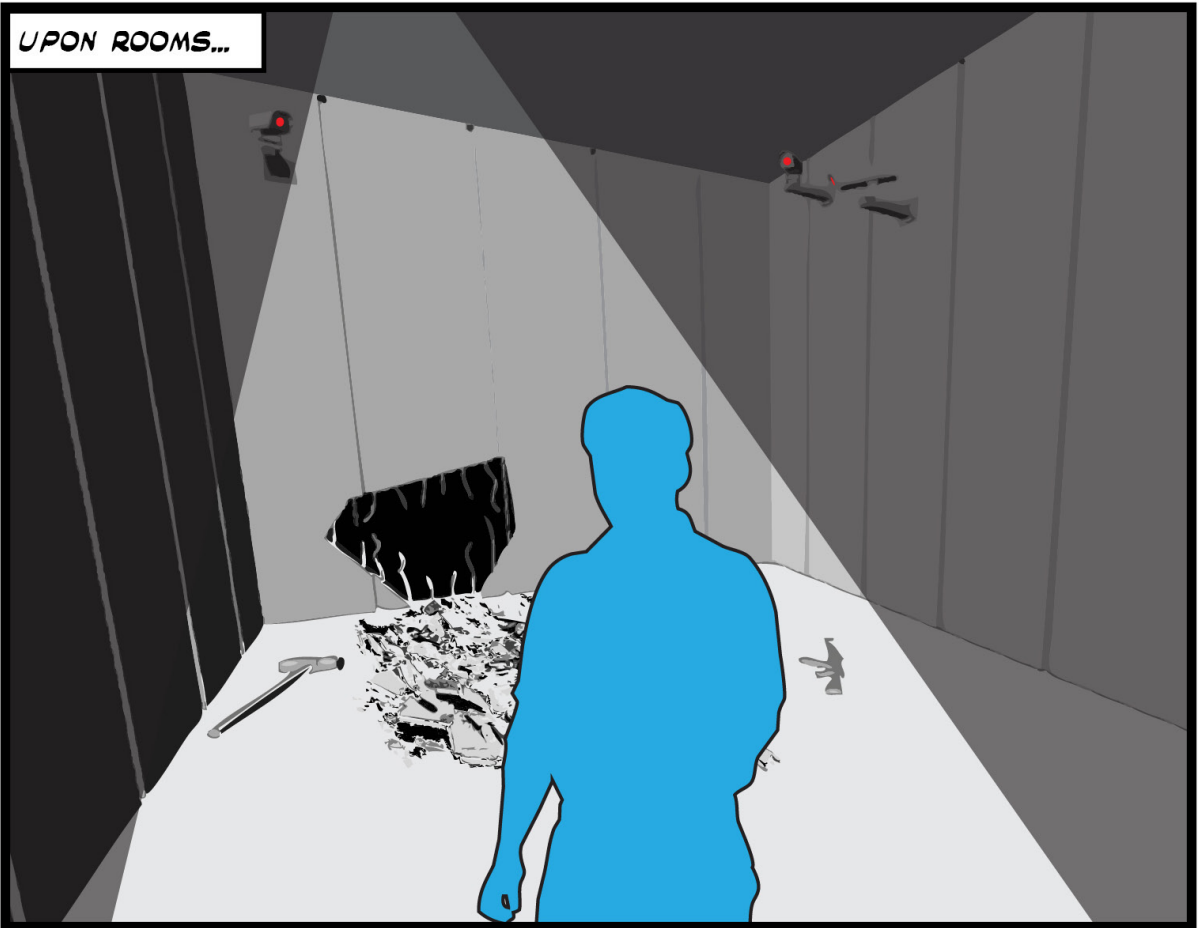
A ZONE OF ROOMS...



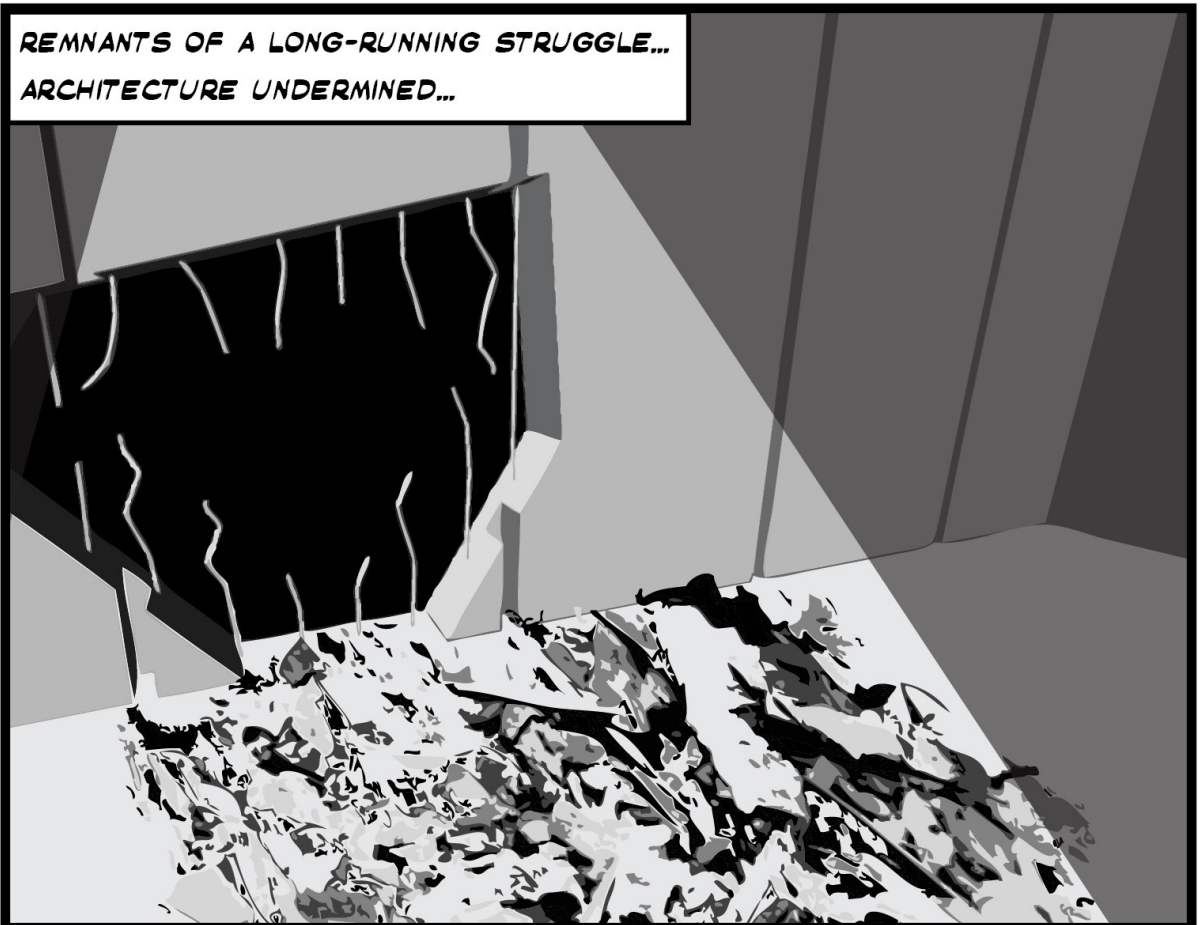
SIGNS OF CONFLICT SCAR THE SPACE...
CONFLICT FROM BOTH SIDES...



UPON ROOMS...



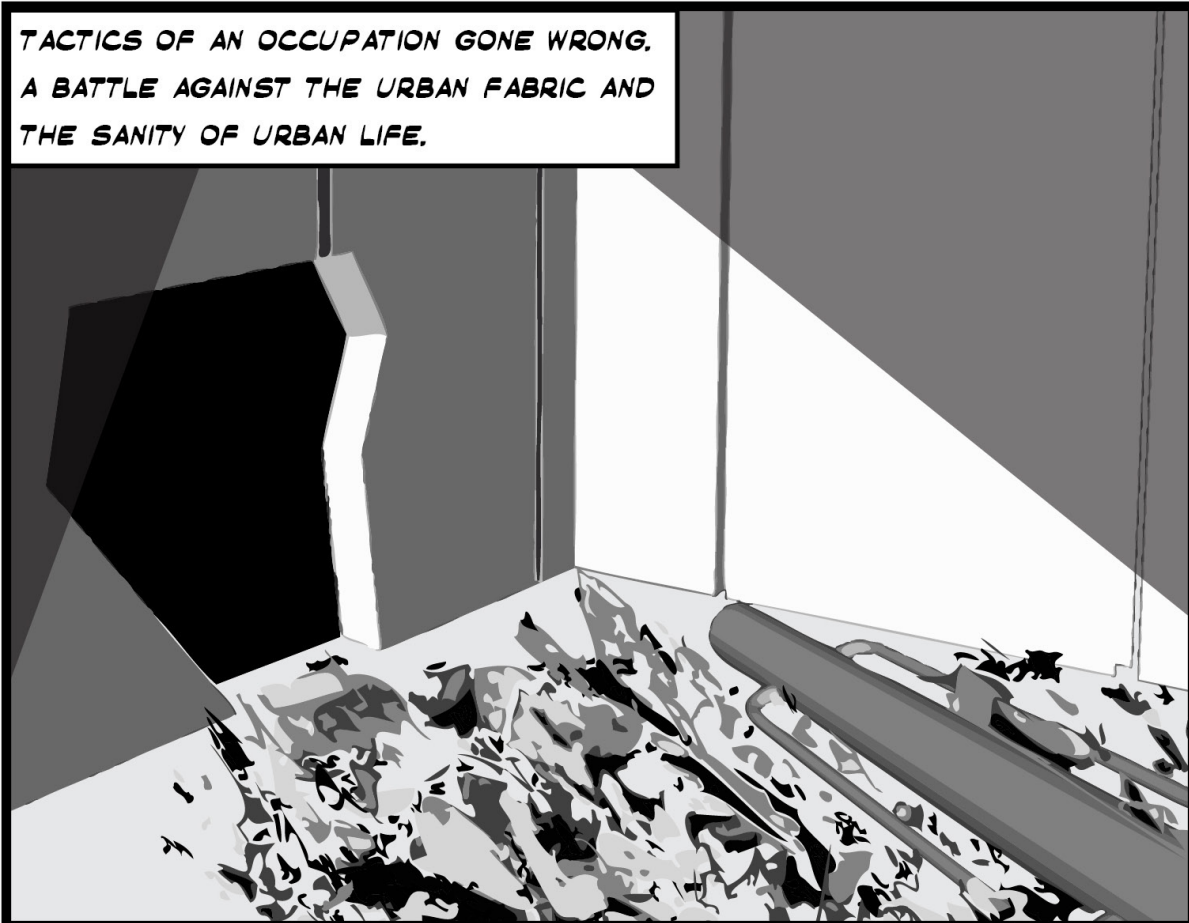
REMNANTS OF A LONG-RUNNING STRUGGLE...
ARCHITECTURE UNDERMINED...



UPON ROOMS...



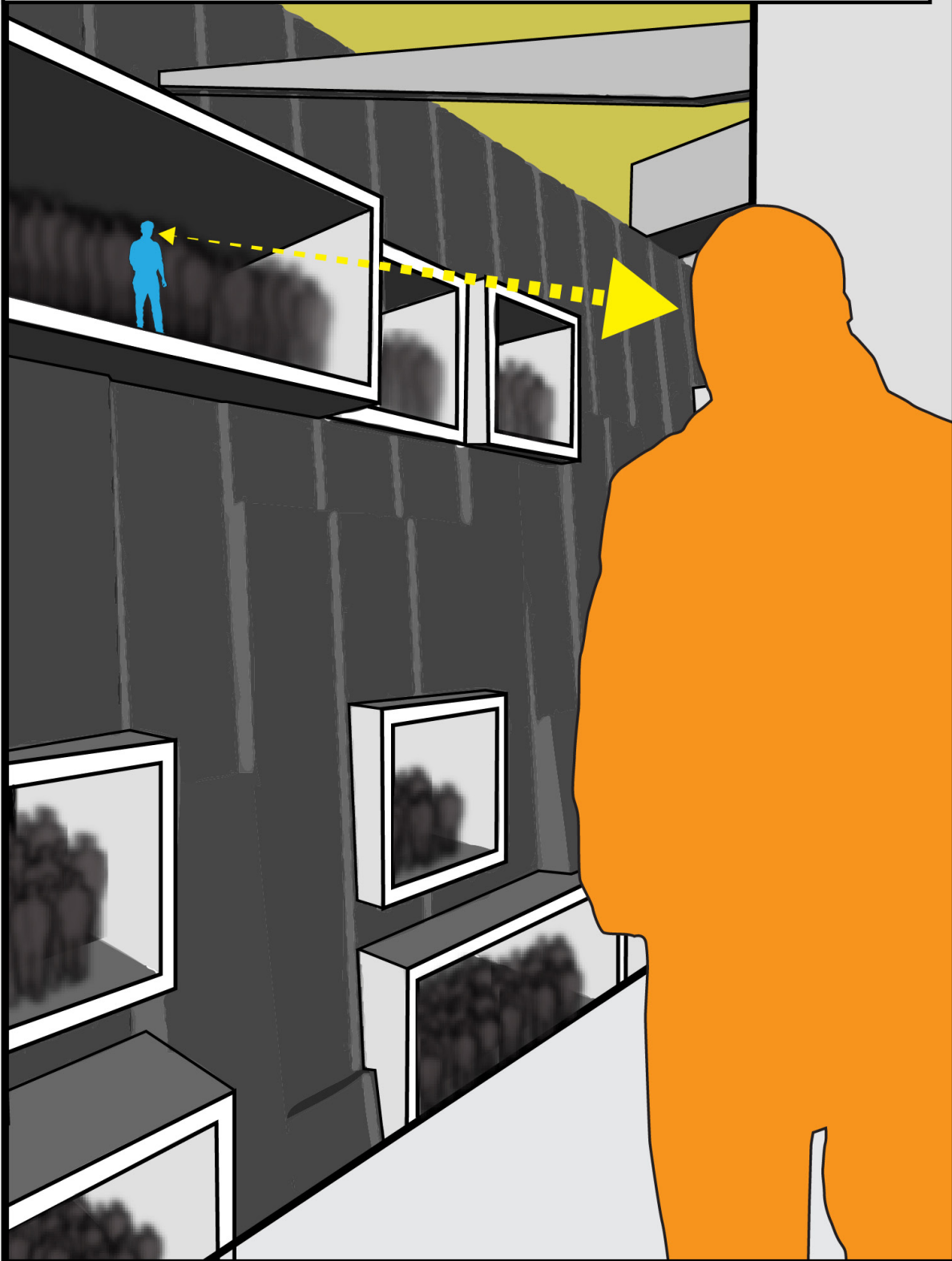
TACTICS OF AN OCCUPATION GONE WRONG.
A BATTLE AGAINST THE URBAN FABRIC AND
THE SANITY OF URBAN LIFE.

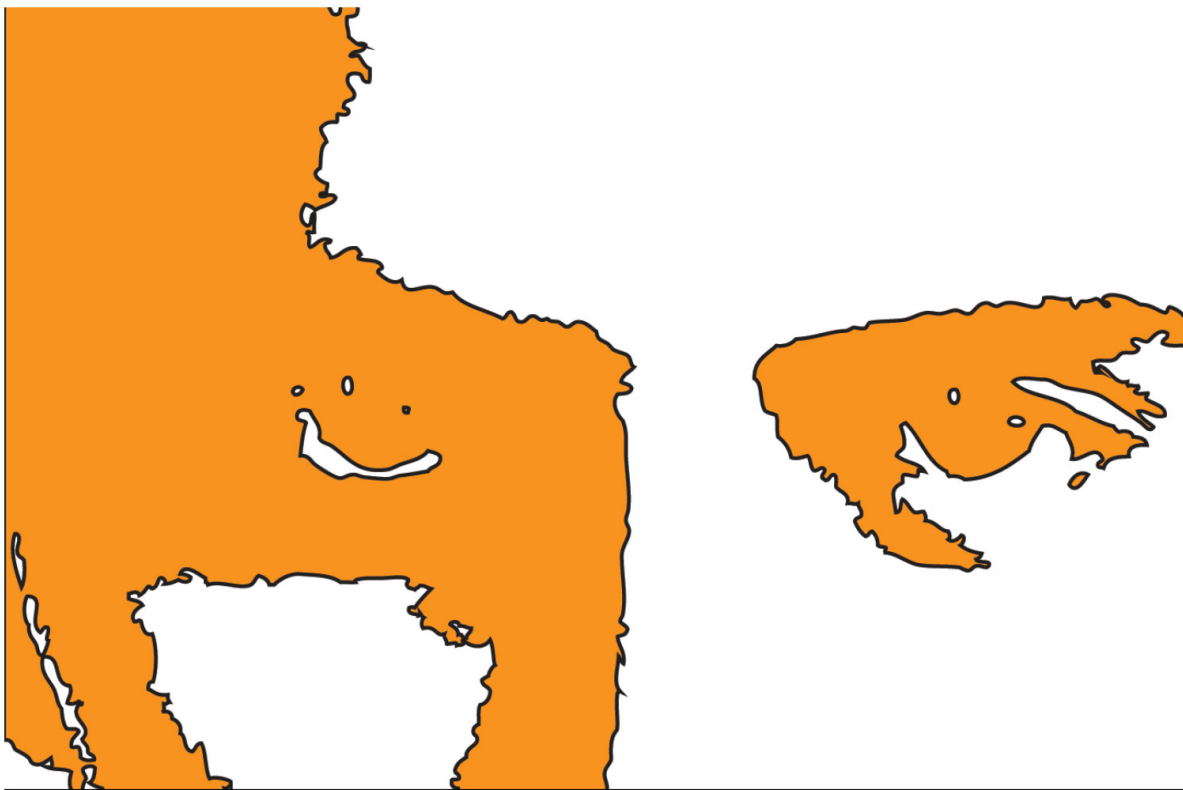




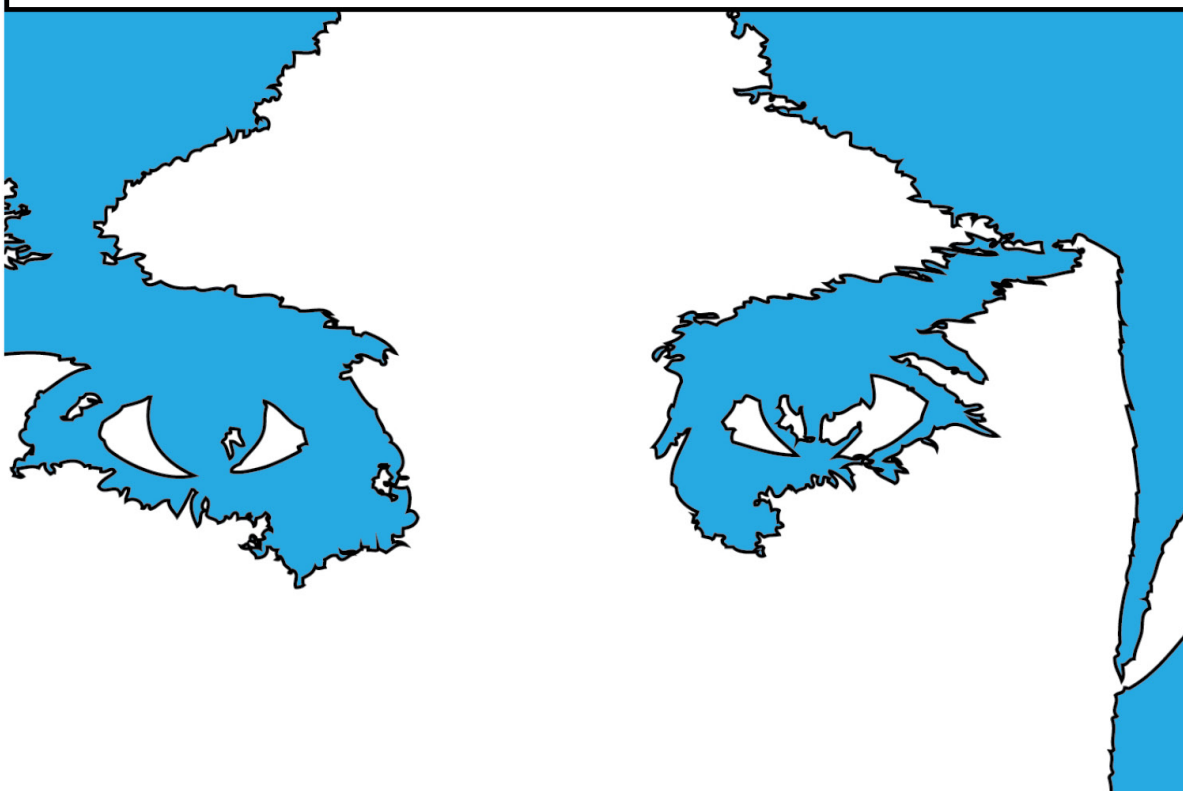
HASSAN EMERGES FROM THE LABYRINTHINE SPATIAL
SEQUENCE ONTO A BREAK, A CHASM CUT ACROSS THE
DEPTH OF THE SEAM. SHADOWED FIGURES FILL SIMILAR
TERMINAL ROOMS ALONG THE DIVIDE: UNKNOWN STORIES OF
UNKNOWN **OTHERS**. BUT ONE EMERGES FROM THE CROWD.
AN INDIVIDUAL.
AN IDENTITY.

HERE THEIR STORIES MEET, ACROSS THE DIVIDE, IN A PLACE THAT IS ALIEN AND STRANGE TO BOTH OF THEM. THERE IS NO COMFORT HERE. NEITHER HAS AN UPPER HAND. THEY SEE THE OTHER, NOT AS WILD OR UNKNOWN, BUT AS ANOTHER. THEY HAVE BOTH JOURNEYED ALONG A SIMILAR PATH TO ARRIVE AT THIS POINT, AT THIS CONVERGENCE. HERE THEY STAND AT THE CHASM, AT THE DIVIDE, IN A COMMON SITUATION.

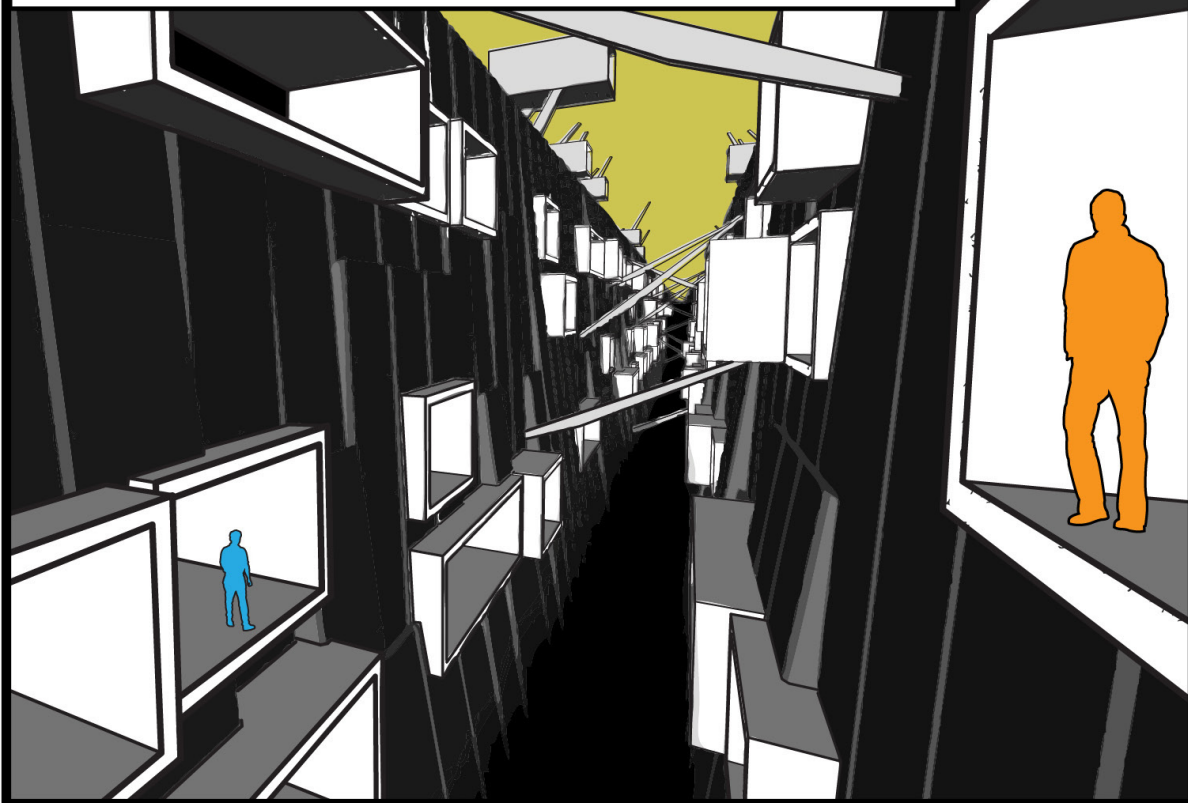




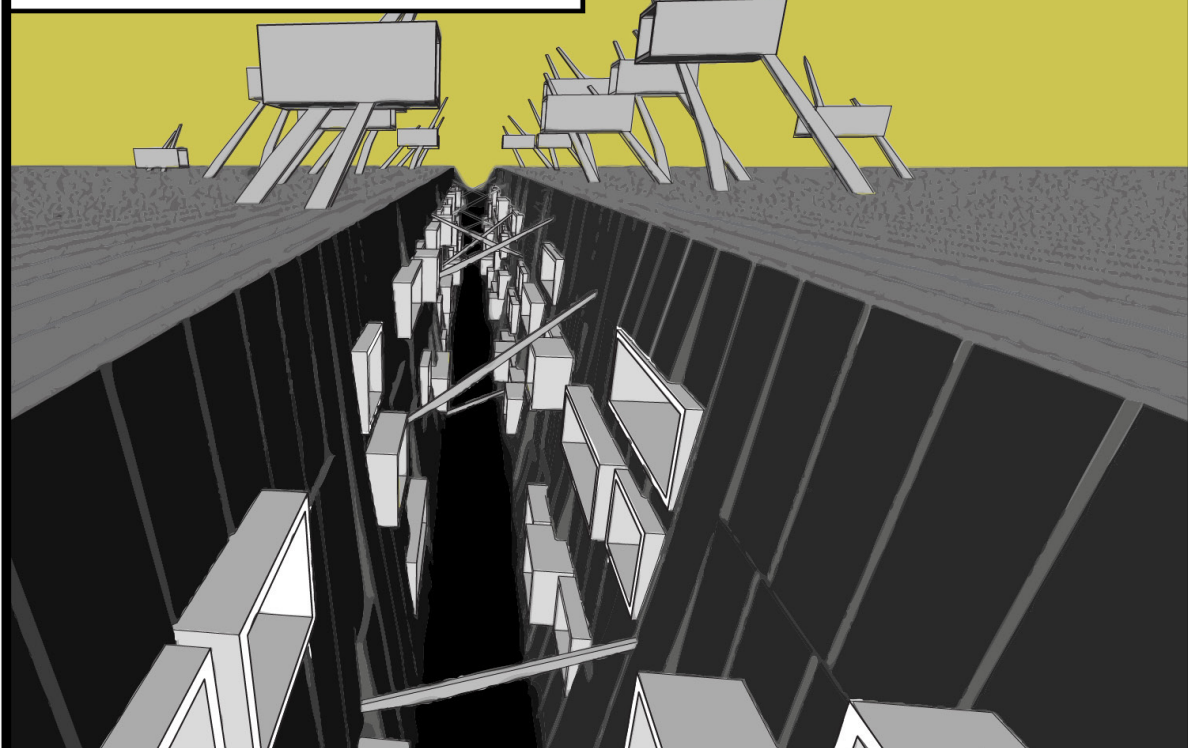
*THEIR EYES MEET FOR JUST A MOMENT.
THERE IS A COMMON HUMANITY HERE.
"MAYBE WE ARE NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER," THEY THINK TO
THEMSELVES, "THEY MAY BE ANOTHER, BUT MAYBE THEY ARE NOT
THE OTHER."
EACH DESIRES AN EXISTANCE, A PLACE, A SPOT TO CALL THEIRS.*



**BUT FIRST THEY MUST CROSS, EXCHANGE, THEY MUST GROW.
THEY MUST PASS THIS PLACE. THIS STRANGE, OTHER PLACE.**

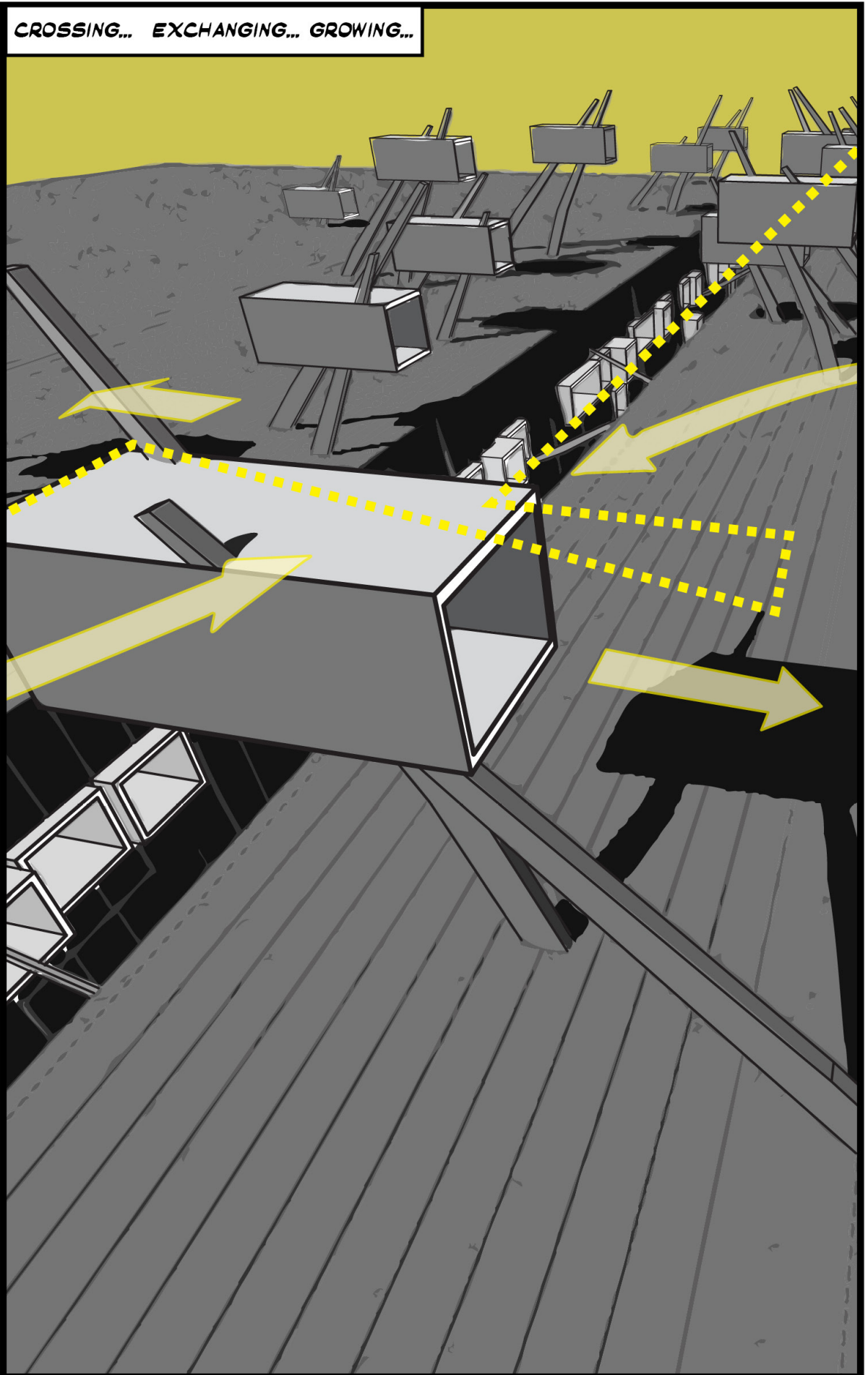


**A MEETING PLACE. A CONVERGENCE
PLACE. A CROSSING PLACE.**

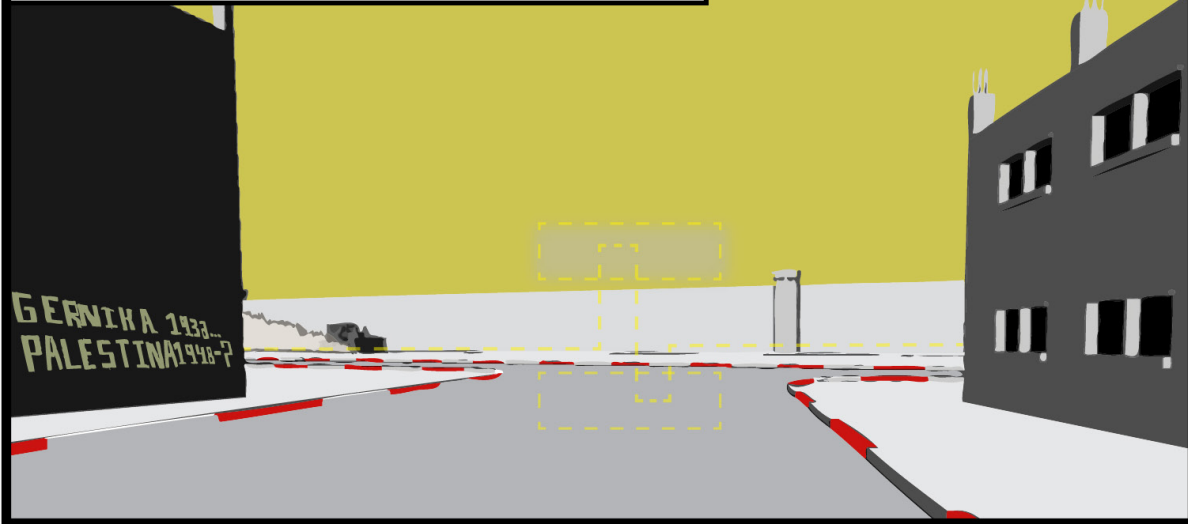


CULTURES, RELIGIONS, PEOPLES, IDEAS, TRADITIONS, FUTURES...

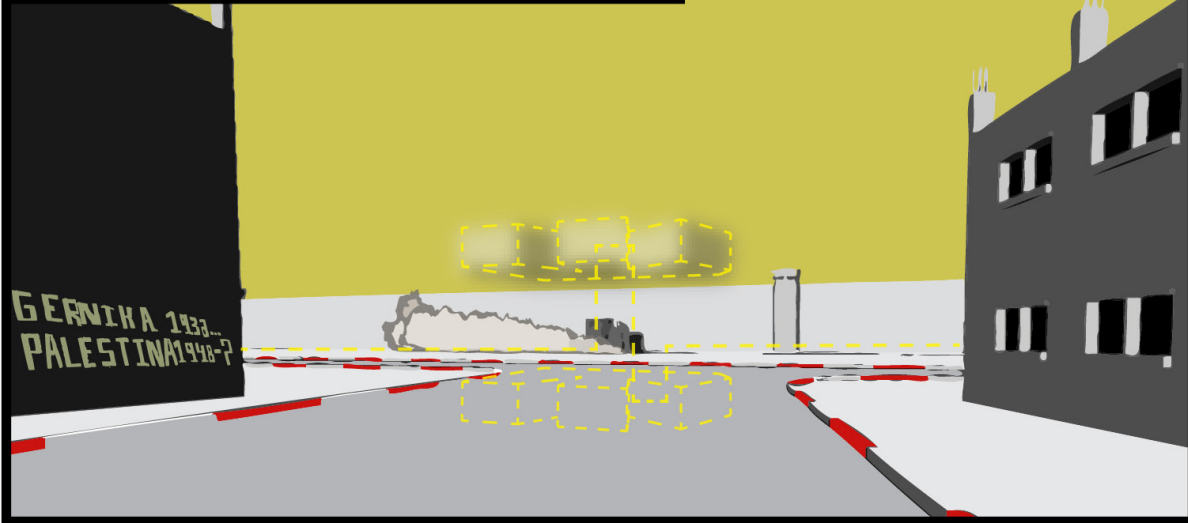
CROSSING... EXCHANGING... GROWING...



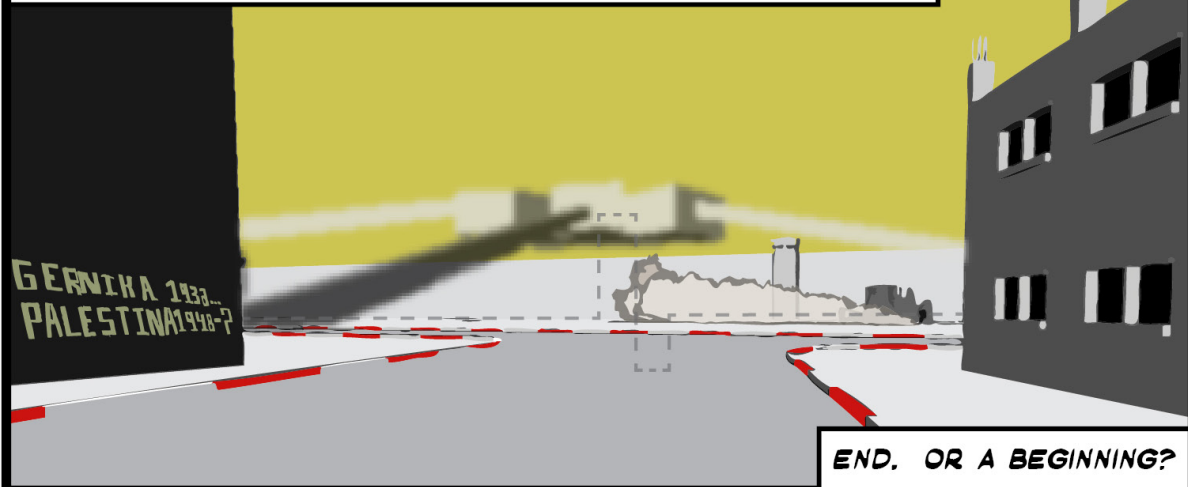
THE CONFLICT HAS GONE ON FOR SO LONG...

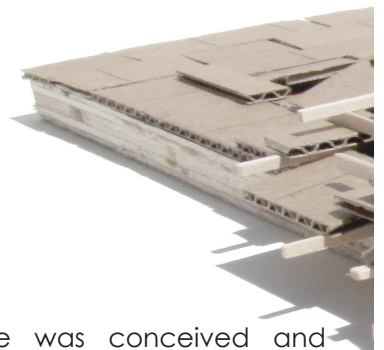


WHAT ROLE CAN THIS CROSSING TAKE NOW?



THAT IS UP TO THE PEOPLE... BUT THE SETTING HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND THEY MUST GROW OR PERISH TOGETHER...

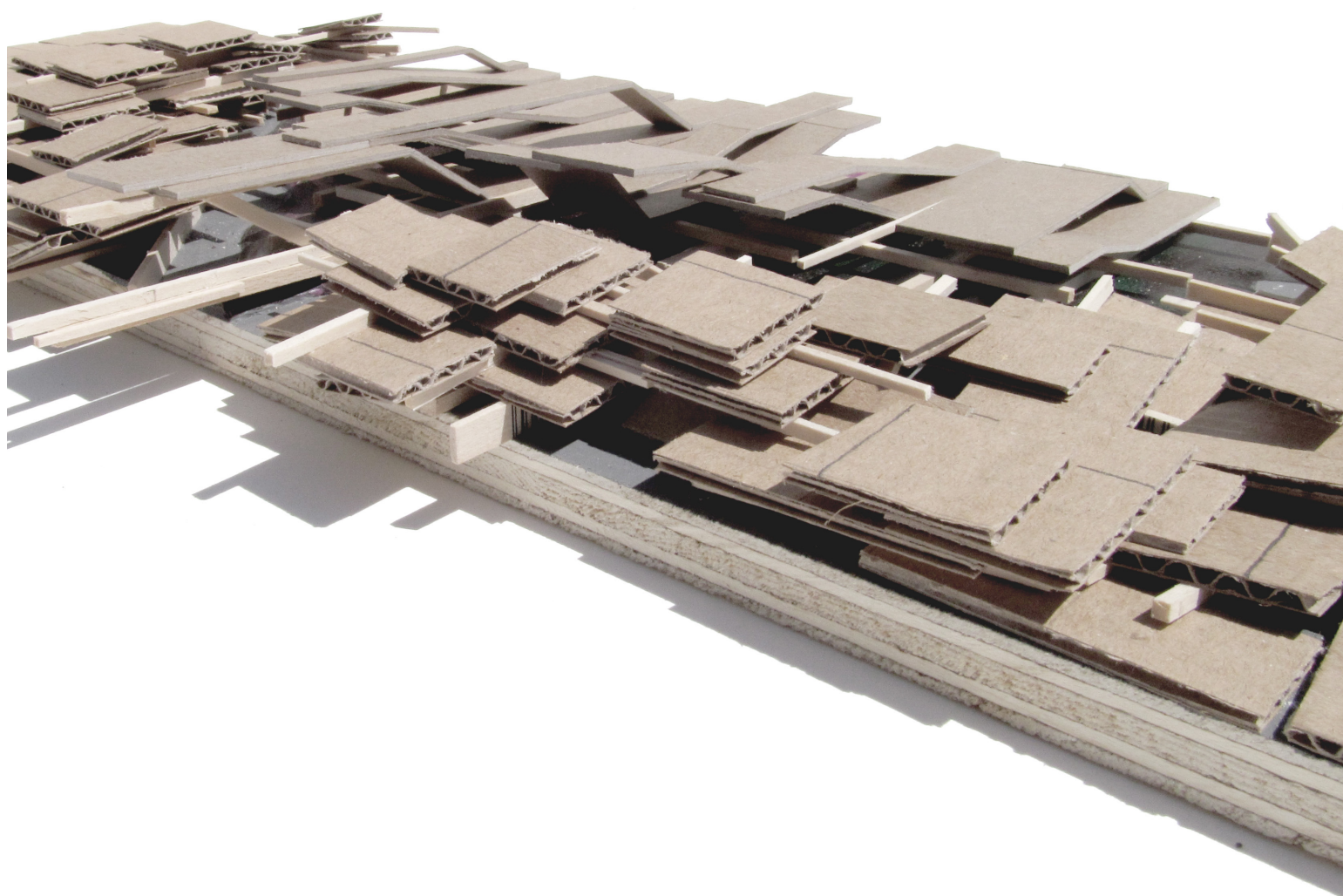




A second narrative storyline was conceived and developed through the construction of a gestural model. *The Tower of Babel* narrative was loosely based on the biblical story of its namesake: two different, but related, cultures with two different languages develop continuously more and more dense and vertical communities due to a high birthrate and continued immigration support into the region. For control and surveillance reasons this dense development is centered along the border seam between these two peoples, and becomes a focal point for interaction. Though there is limited communication, action on one side of the seam is reflected through the built fabric on the other side as the two sides continually jostle for control and dominance over the seam and the other side.

This narrative was developed through an abstract gestural model which reflects a condition of how this urbanisation might grow. The model is built with cardboard, chipboard, and basswood on a found object base.

THE TOWER OF BABEL



The conflict between Israel and Palestine is a unique condition of war. It is not an active conflict, as in an offensive in the traditional understanding of war and conflict. There is no shifting dynamic of armies massed against each other. It is a latent conflict.

Rather, the conflict found between Israel and Palestine has degenerated into a state of attrition and occupation. A conflict of symbolism: demonstrations of ability and power, reminders from both sides of the others existence. As a system, this realizes itself as a Conflict of Dialogue in a large encompassing definition. A dialogue, at its most basic, is an exchange. Two or more sides are involved and something is exchange, whether it is ideas and opinions or simply a demonstration of existence and ability. These dialogues can be positive, such as a political negotiation for exchanges of territory or an intellectual conference exchanging ideas between Israeli and Palestinian scholars, or they can be negative engagements: every retaliatory rocket or missile strike from either side is a form of dialogue. A Palestinian boy throwing stones at an Israeli soldier while that soldier fires tear gas back is a dialogue between two sides.

These dialogues are not coordinated, tactical responses to necessarily elicit a victory; rather they are tools of a conflict of attrition and continuation. The conflict feeds itself. Dialogues precipitate more dialogues and more 'exchange.' Even the act of refusing exchange, in the way of freezing of political negotiations is exchanging a particular message to the other side, and in so doing continues the dialogue.

The West Bank security fence, the physical barrier that is near completion around the occupied West Bank contradicts this idea of a conflict of dialogue. The barrier represents a removal of dialogue and interaction. It is a blank background that allows for continuity along itself on either side but removes continuity across, between the two sides. Along the wall is a barren zone, left emptied of productive use as a sort of buffer zone between the two sides. This seam is not valueless and should not be underestimated. While the wall is a tool of occupation and oppression, the role of a seam or buffer between these two long struggling peoples holds value as a definition of border and distinction.

Past this void zone begins the urbanization of the seam zone. Towns, villages, settlements, neighborhoods, refugee camps, and military points: expanding and mimicking each other across this void. Over time, this urbanization is certain only to increase. High birthrates among Palestinians and orthodox Jews, as well as an intensive immigration campaign by Israel to gather Jewish peoples from around the world will lead to future population increases within an extremely limited area of land. One can speculate that this population increase will grow at the cheap and strategically important land of the seam zone. Tactically, the urbanization, and therefore establishment, along the seam equals the control and supervision of that area and becomes another tool of the Conflict of Dialogue.

This is a future of ultra urbanization in the Holy Land.





THE SITE

JERUSALEM SEAM ZONE

The development of the thesis necessitated zooming in from the scale of the entire West Bank to a more selective area. The Seam Zone around Jerusalem was selected for a more detailed mapping exercise due to its importance and claims from both sides as well as the dynamic nature of the shifts and reroutes of the seam in this region.

The following mapping exercise traces the route of the seam zone between what is considered Israeli and Palestinian territory, and in relation to the original 1948 Green Line as it runs around and through Jerusalem. As well the physical presence of the wall itself is categorized with concrete barrier represented with a solid line and sections of electronic fence represented with a dashed line. Checkpoints across the wall are shown. Finally, perceptual and geographic connections are identified between communities across the seam zone. However, these connections are rarely realized due to the existence of the wall.

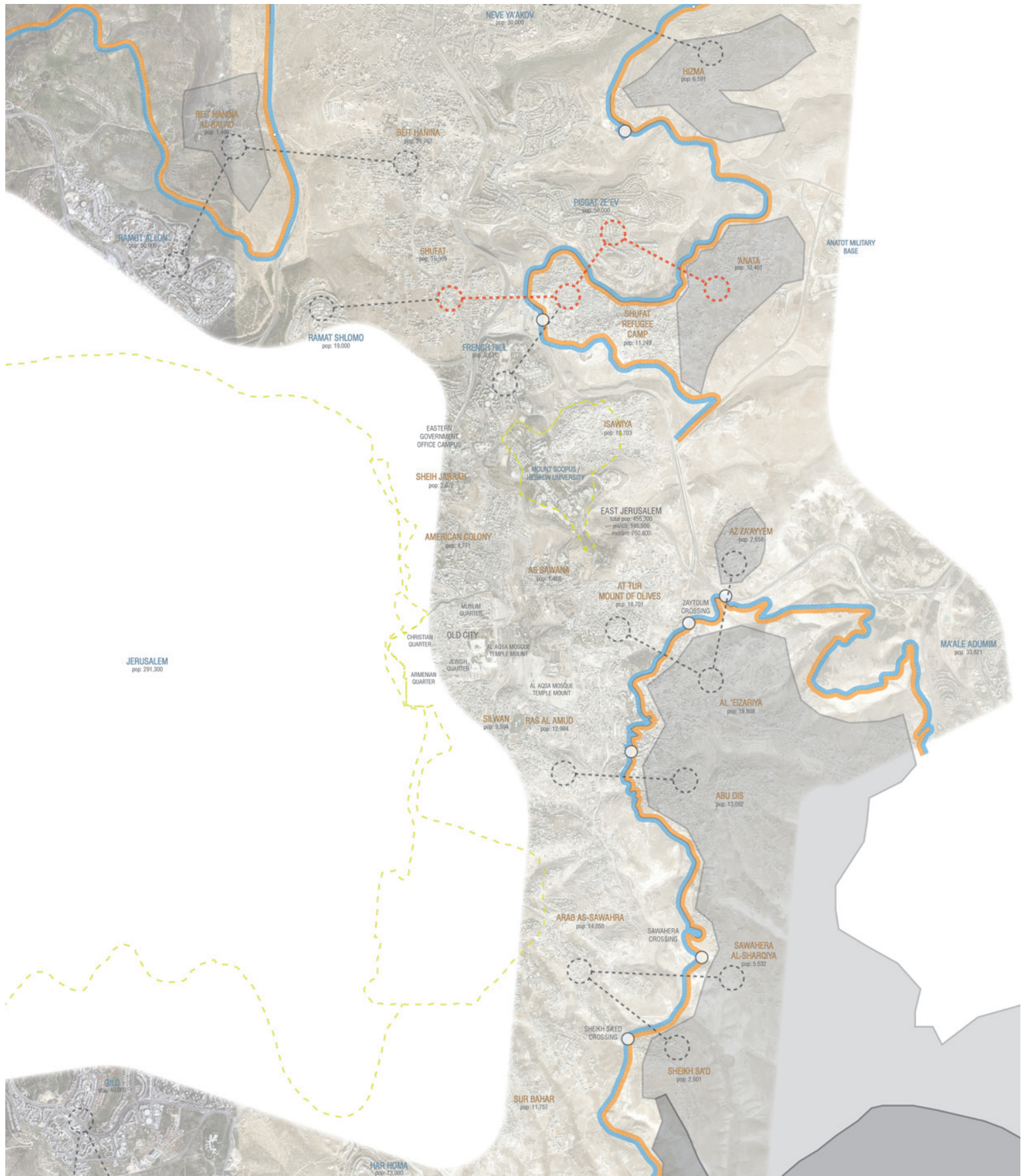


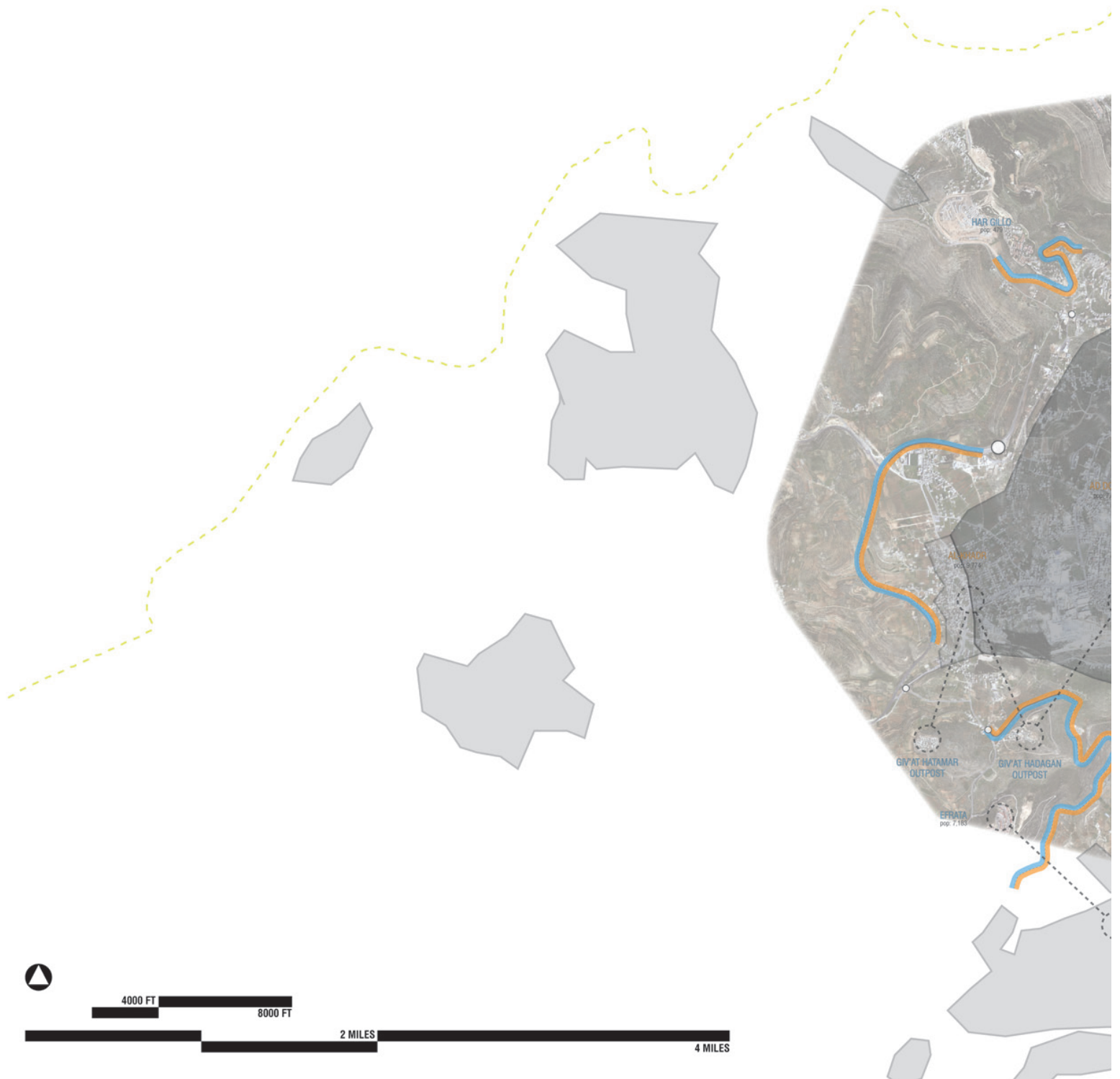
ISRAEL-PALESTINE SEAM ZONE: JERUSALEM REGION

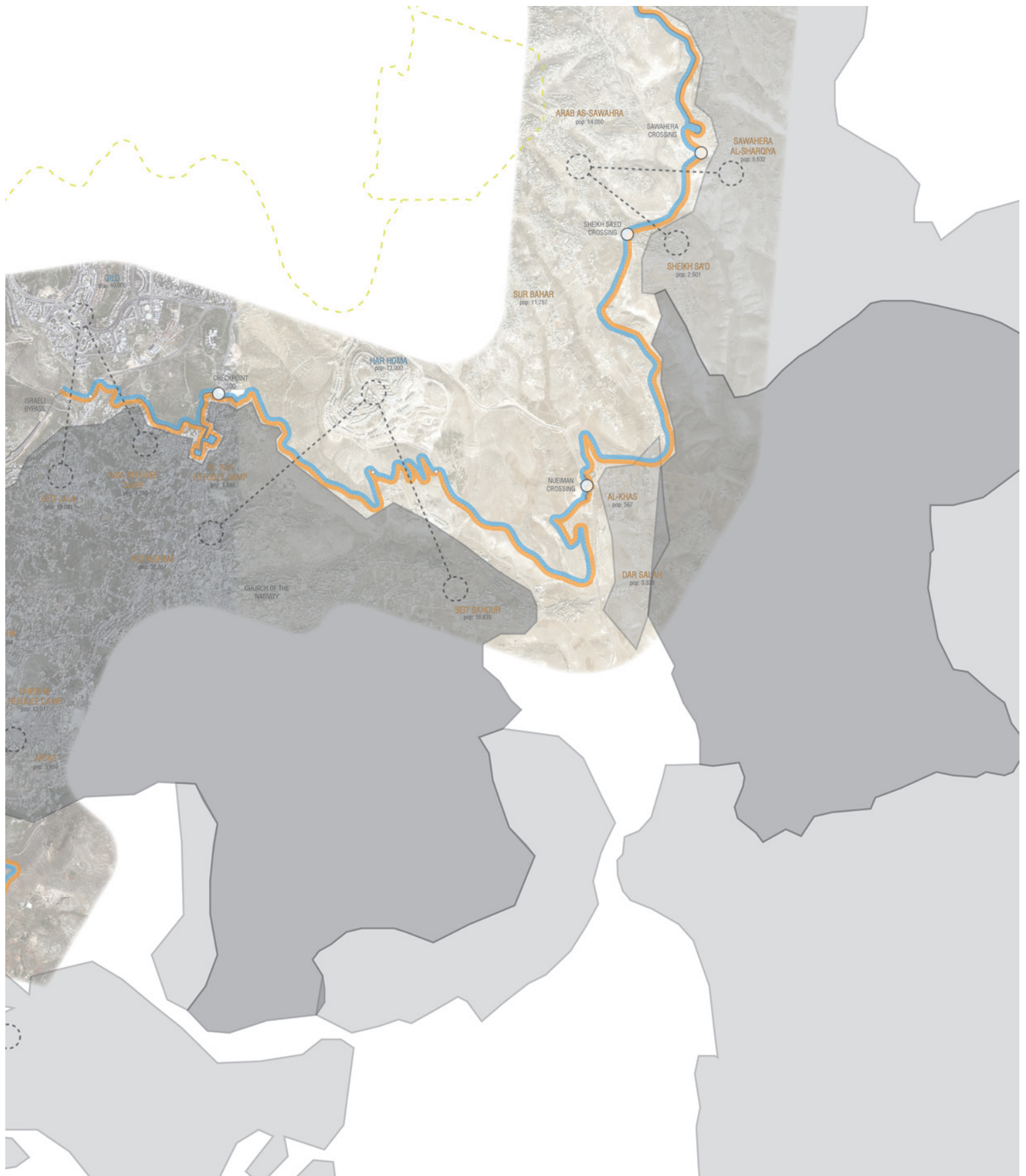


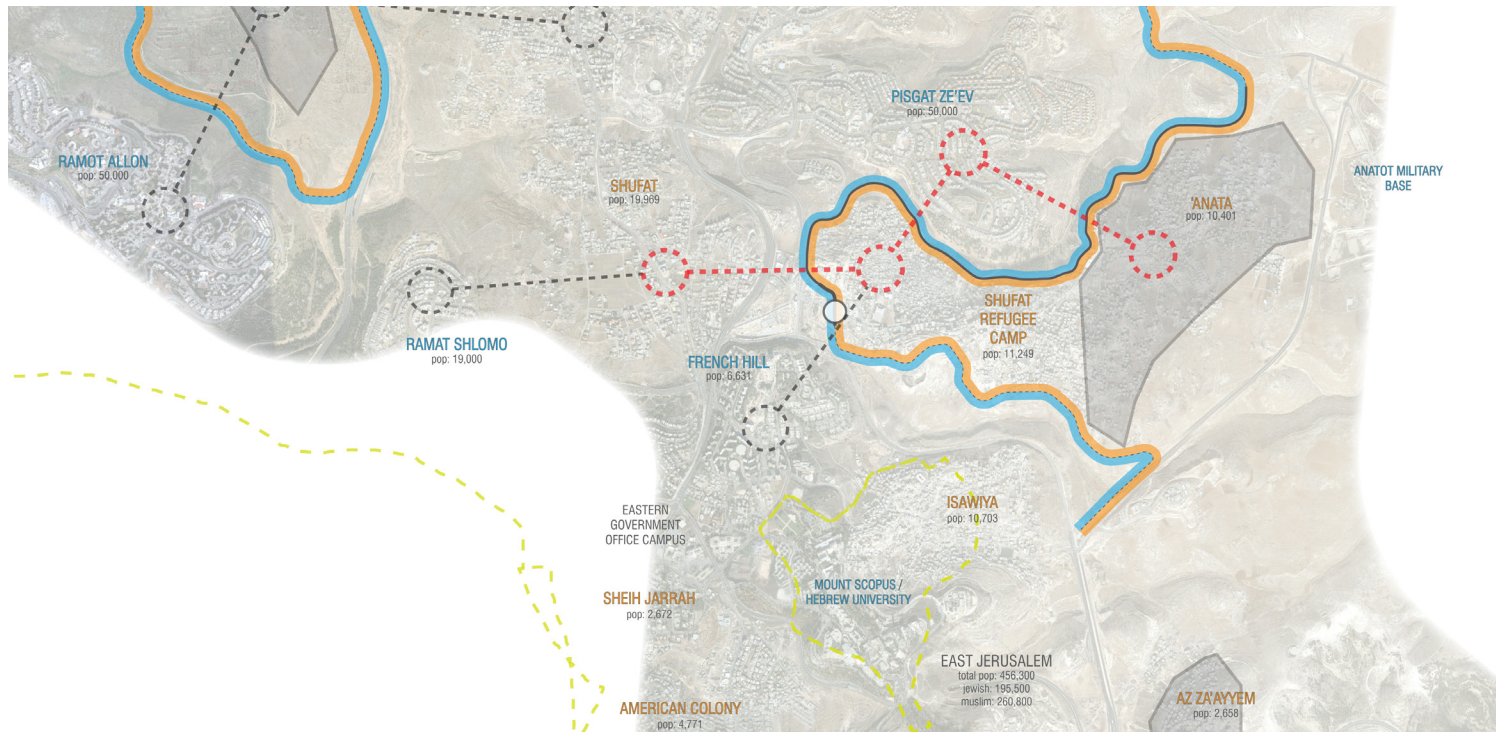










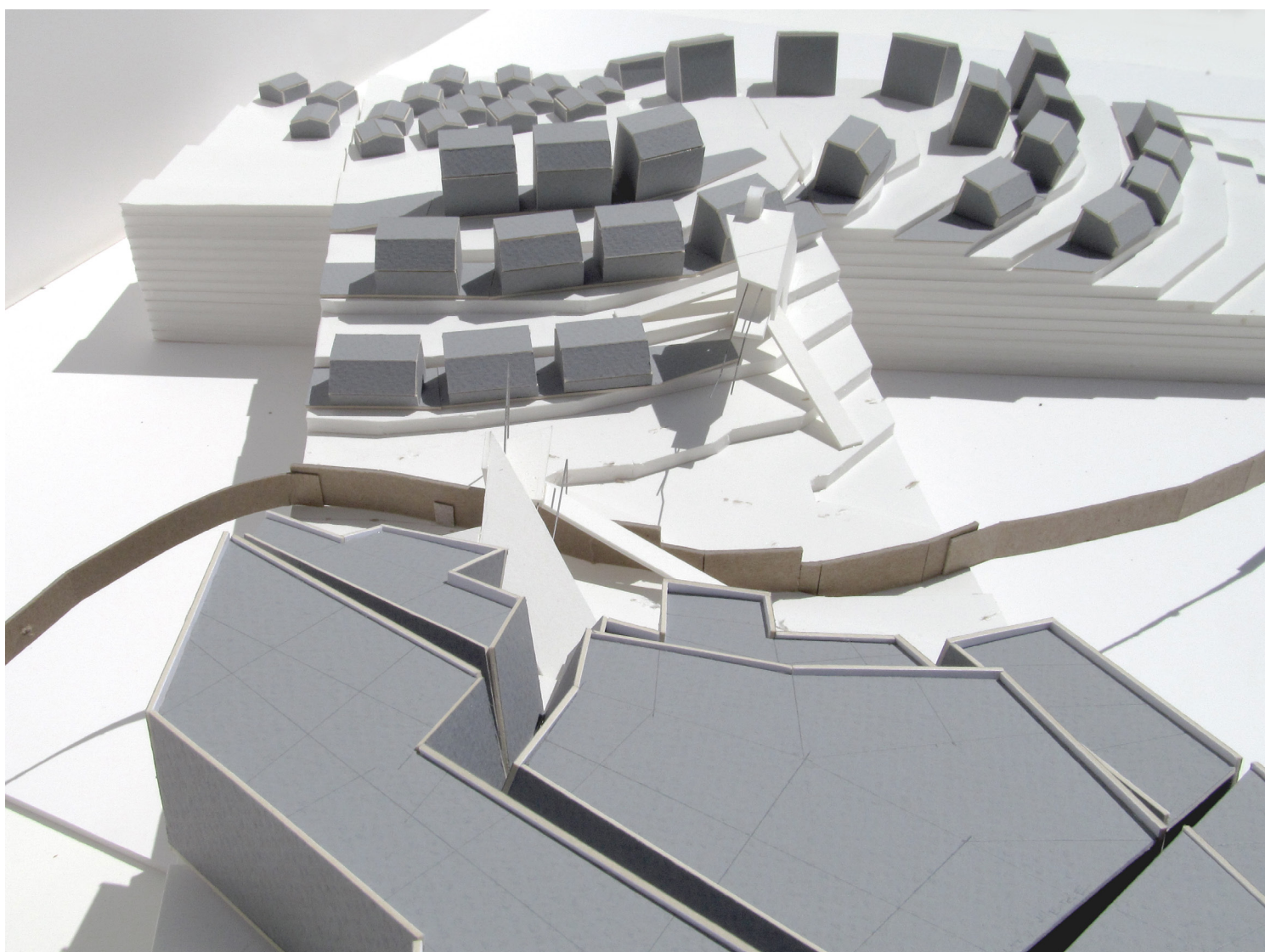
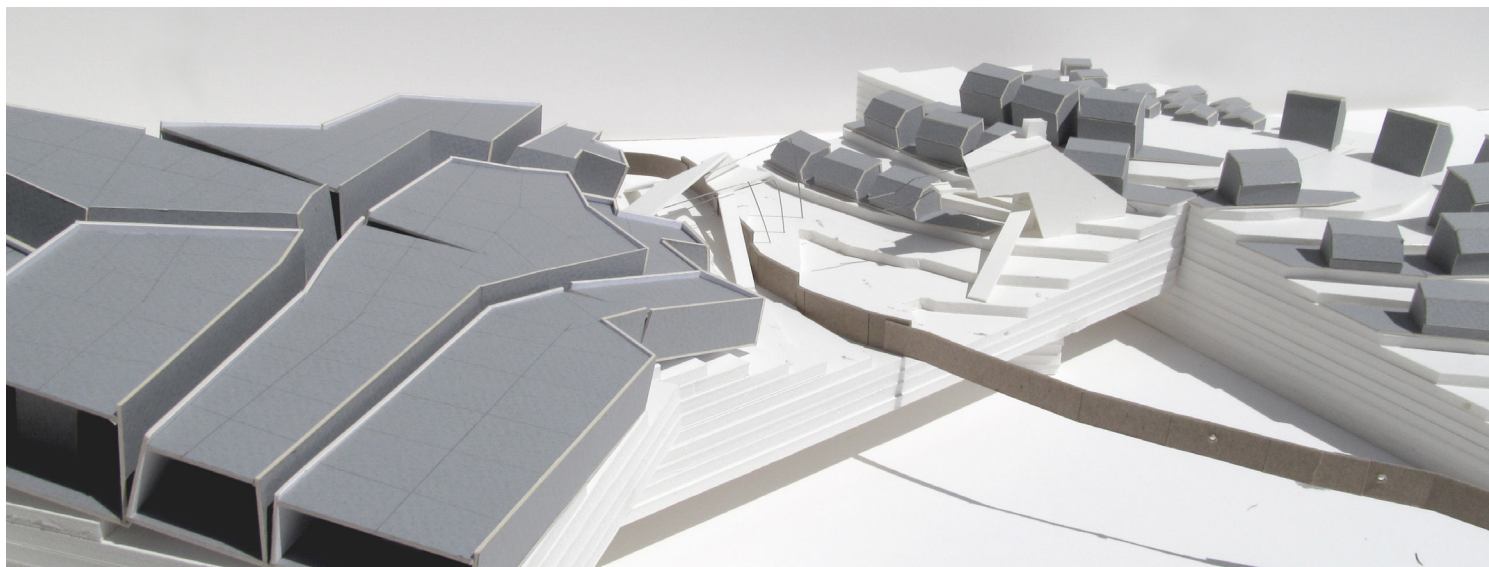


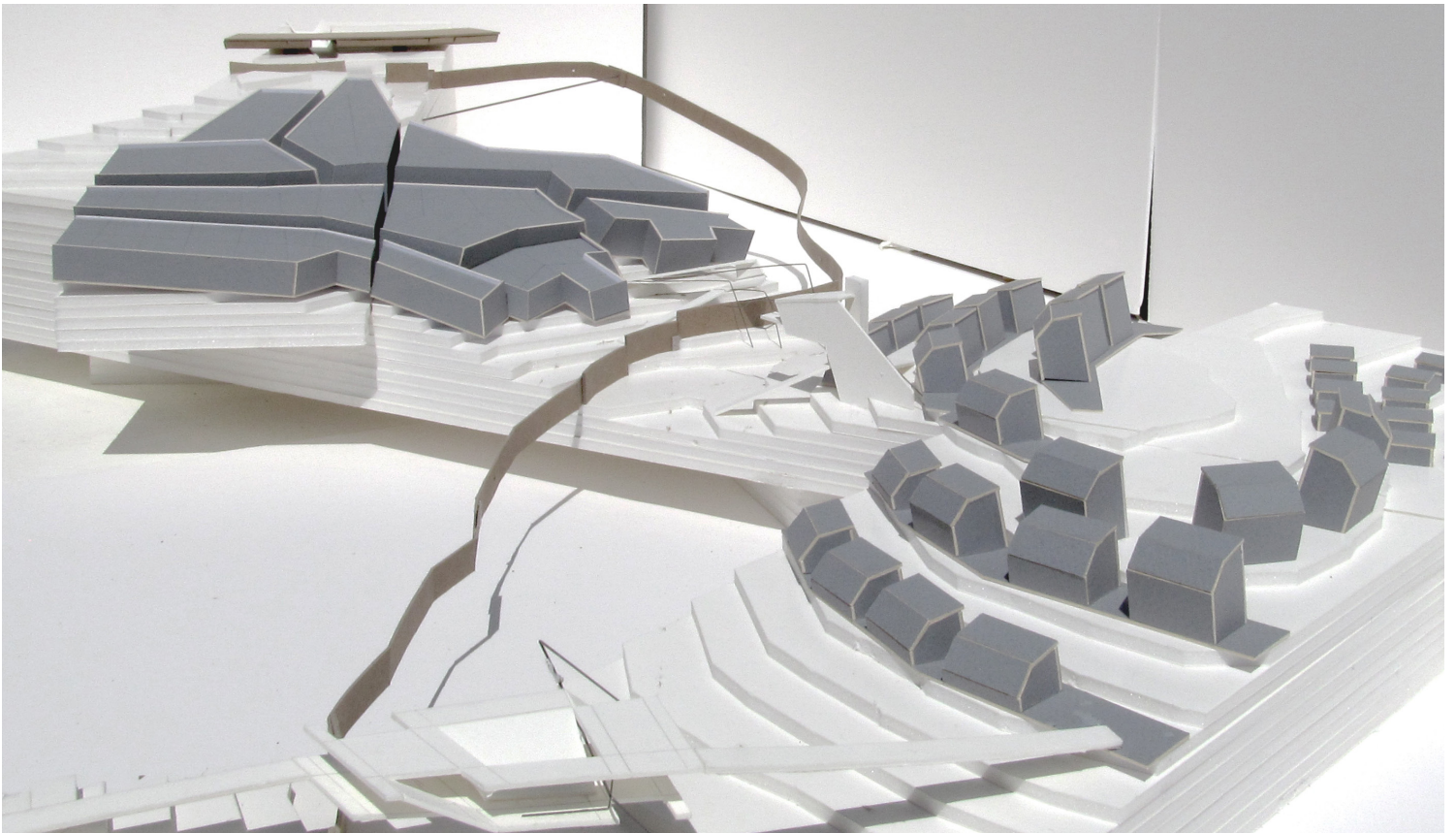
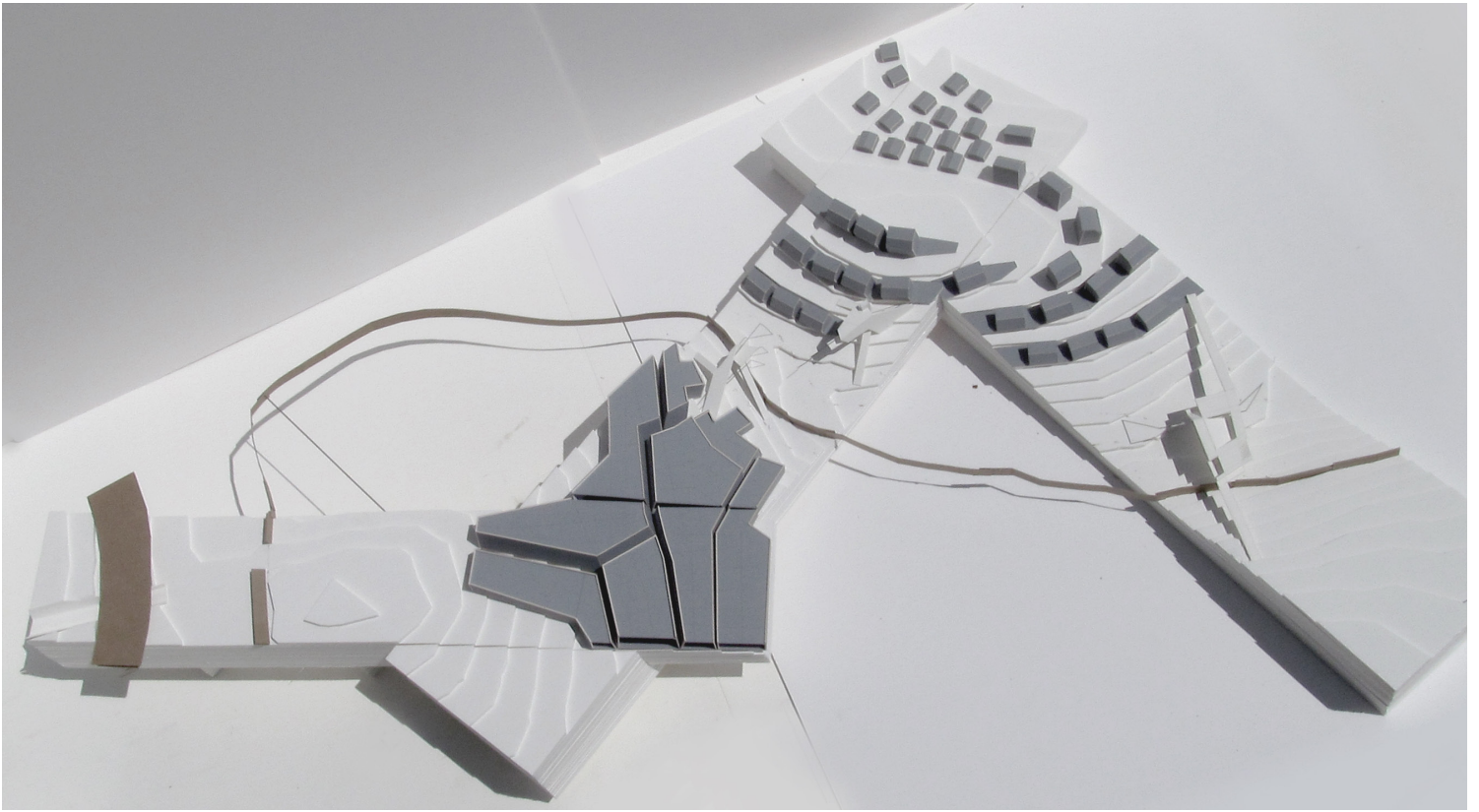
The seam zone between the Israeli settlement of Pissgat Ze'ev and the Shufat refugee camp was chosen as a site to zoom into for a more detailed look at a relationship across the wall. Both are large and established communities and occupy opposing hilltops. These communities exist within a dynamic network of Israeli settlements and Palestinian villages which oppose each other across the seam but would seem to logically form connected communities. Currently a section of concrete barrier wall wraps around the Shufat refugee camp.

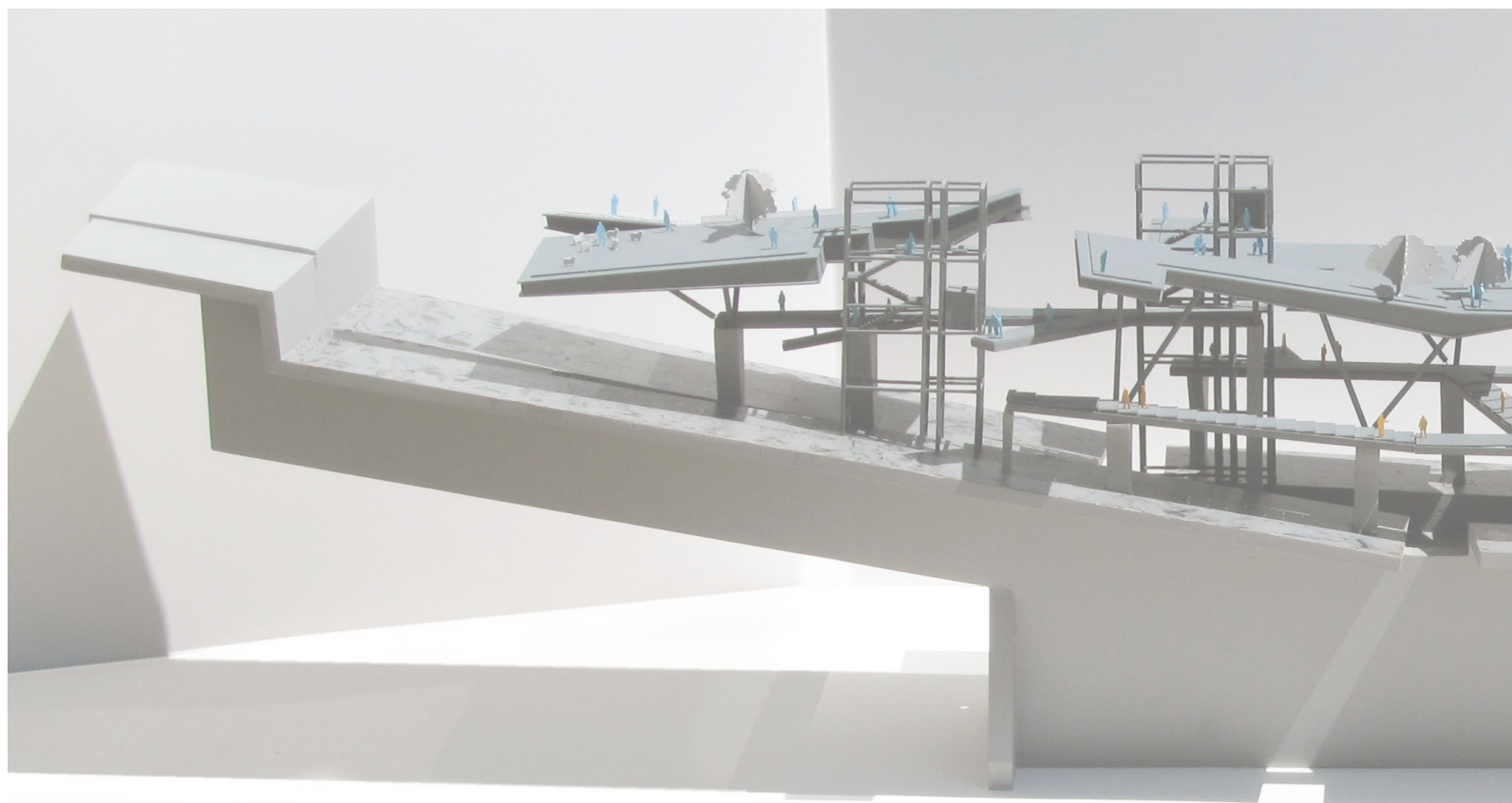
Aerial observation of the seam zone in this area reveals that the actual ground which sits between the urban extents of the surrounding communities is little used and is left as a barren separation between what is Israeli and Palestinian. Between the hilltops of Pissgat Ze'ev and Shufat, the seam exists as a natural drainage channel. What was arable hinterlands for the surrounding communities has become an unused actualization of the division within this region.

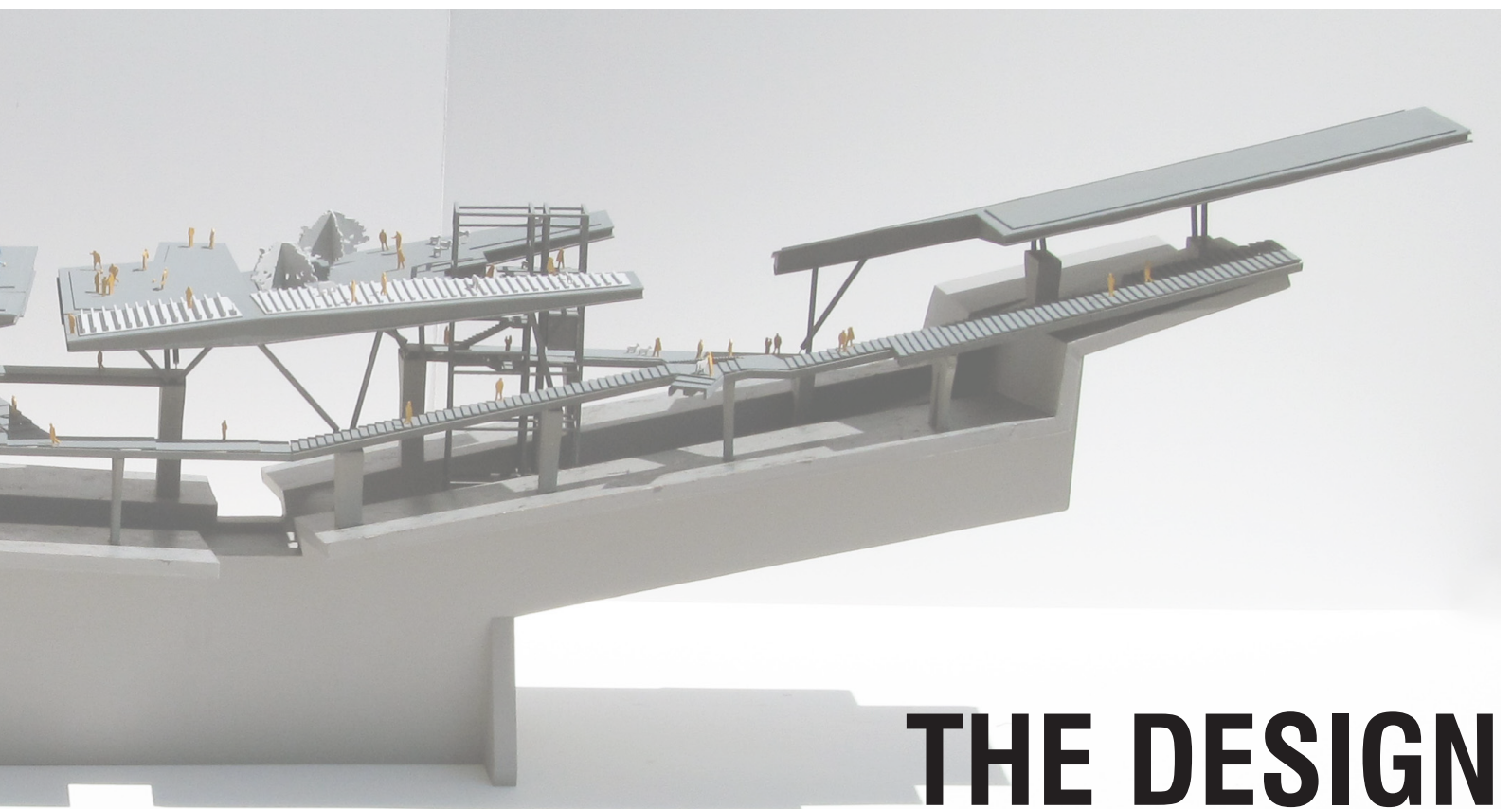
PISGAT ZE'EV - SHUFAT









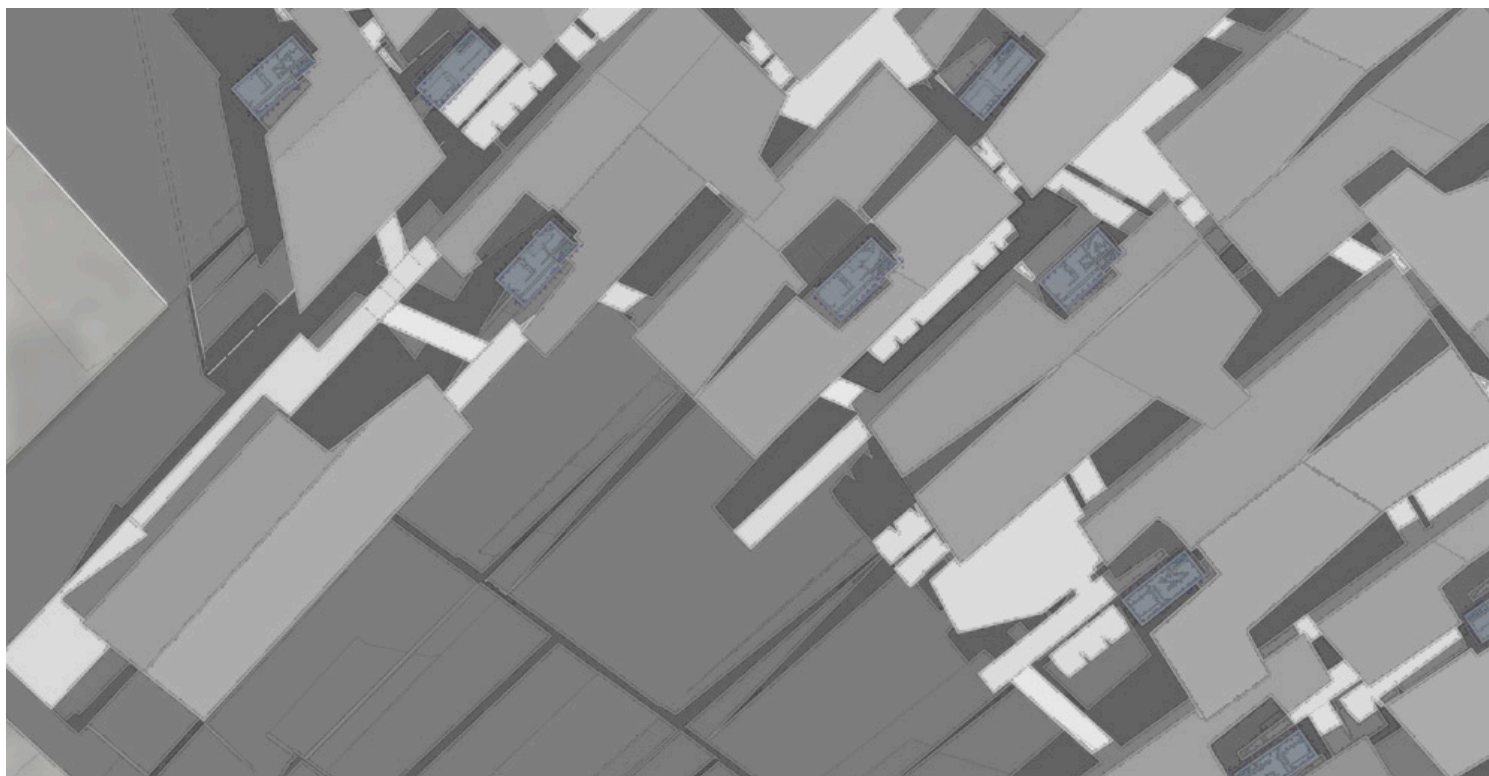


THE DESIGN

This seam that exists between Israel and Palestine can remain an empty, abandoned land that reflects the lack of communication and misunderstanding of the current conflict. Left as is, the wall breaks communication and dialogue. The seam will become a disused backyard of the conflict where the edges of society are pushed to. This in no way will benefit the conflict. A reactivation of dialogue across the seam is necessary for the further evolution, and hopeful resolution, of this conflict.

How do you create an opportunity for dialogue within a zone that also respects separation and distinction?

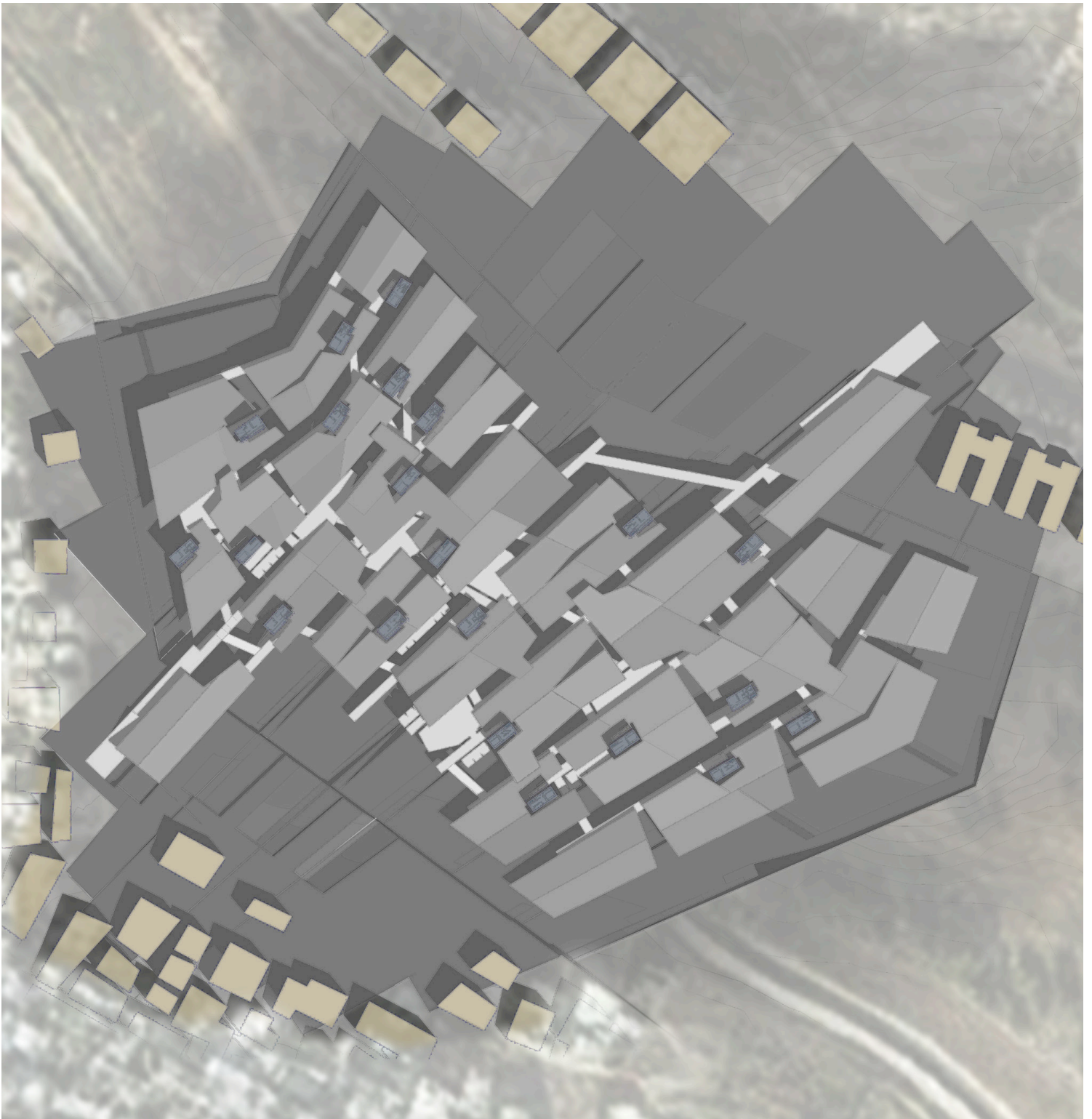
The design of the seam zone becomes a new landscape of 'dialogue', a reflection of the shifts and exchanges of the conflict. Pathways overlap and cross each other, set within an infrastructural landscape: the framework for the occupation and exchange across the seam. A facility programed to occupy and exchange.



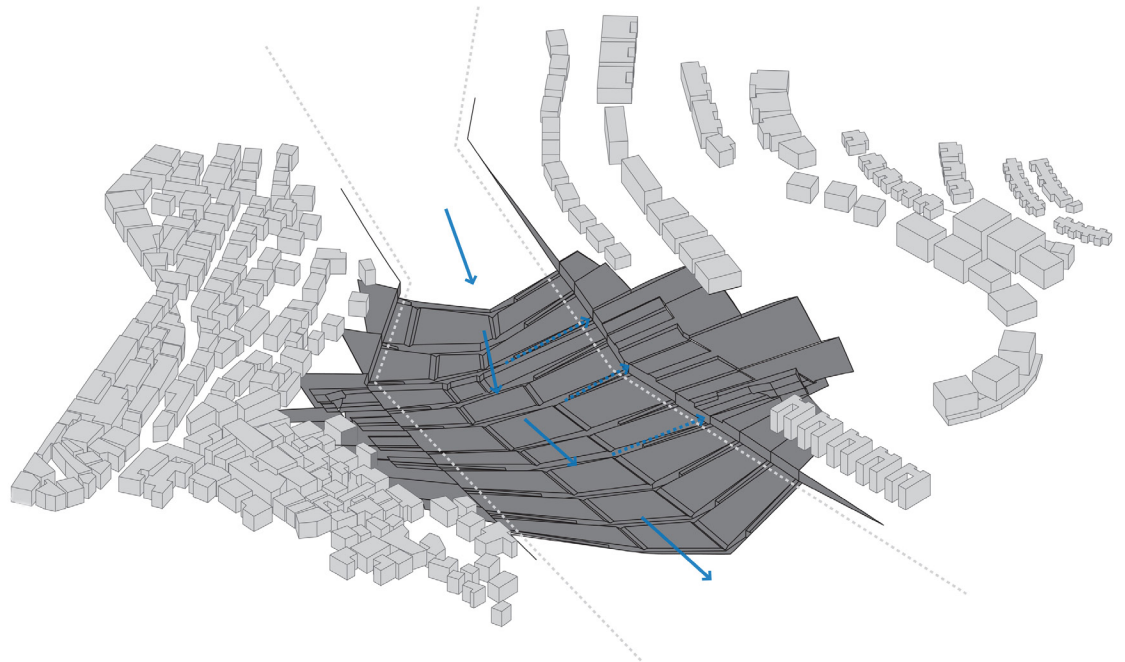
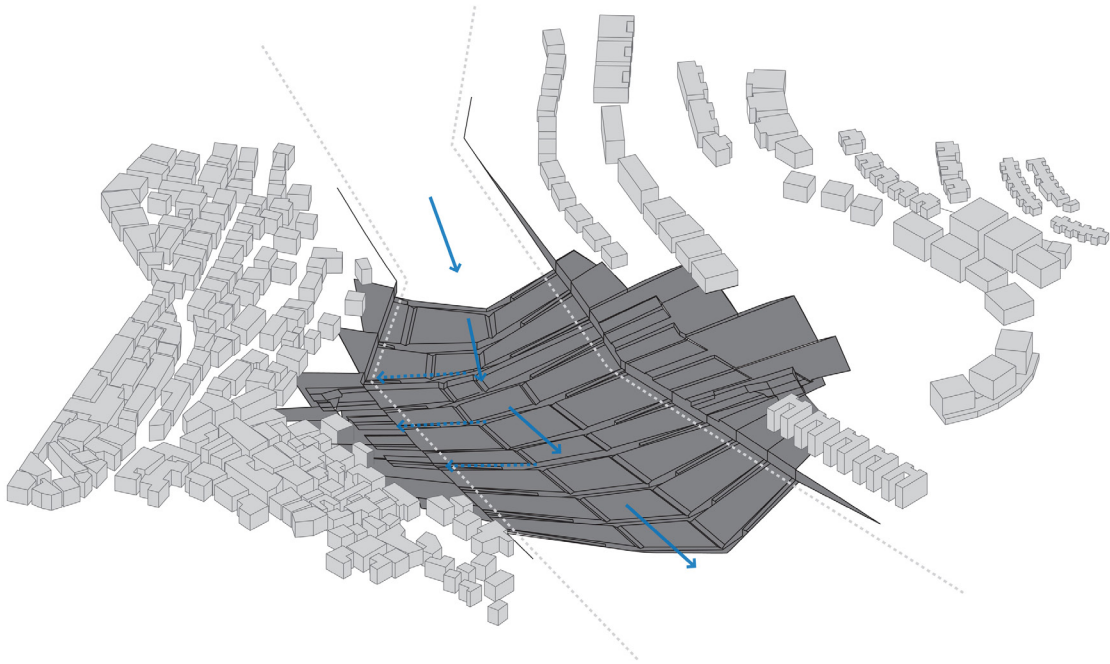
The facility occupies the natural valley which exists between Pisgat Ze'ev and Shufat. The design becomes an extension of the landscape; architecture as landscape, a functioning extension of the unused ground below it.

In the scheme, the existing groundplane is abandoned as a condition of *terra sacre* - ground set aside from the normal everyday uses of landscape, in a way left abandoned. This existing ground plane is left inaccessible to both sides.

Above the ground plane a series of artificial land structures are raised up: a floating artificial ground within the seam zone. Each land structure is claimed and connected to one side in an irregular pattern which creates happenstance adjacencies. It is upon these land structures in which active use is returned to the seam, activities such as agricultural cultivation, pasture grazing and public recreation spaces. As well it is on this artificial surface that an overlap and direct crossing between sides can be facilitated.

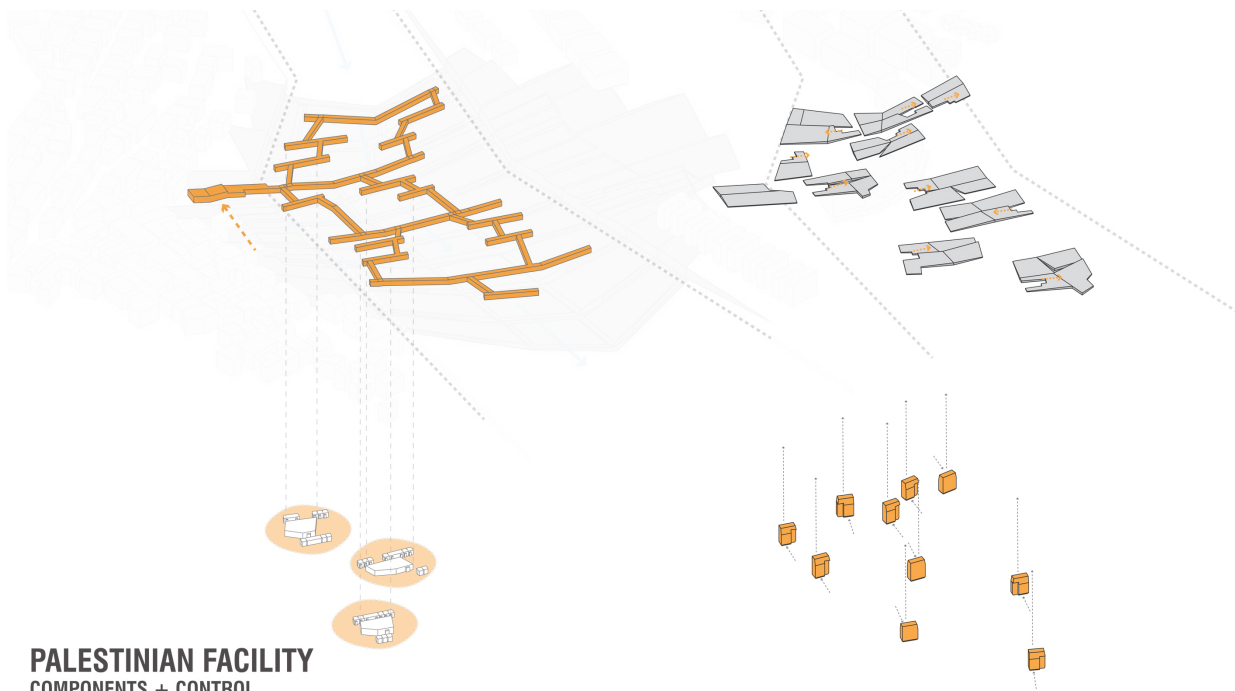


The ground plane below, while left empty of direct occupation from either side, is preserved as a part of the natural drainage system of the existing site characteristics. The topography is cut across forming a system of perpendicular channels under the land forms. These channels catch and retain water as it drains downhill which can then be diverted for use in the neighboring communities.

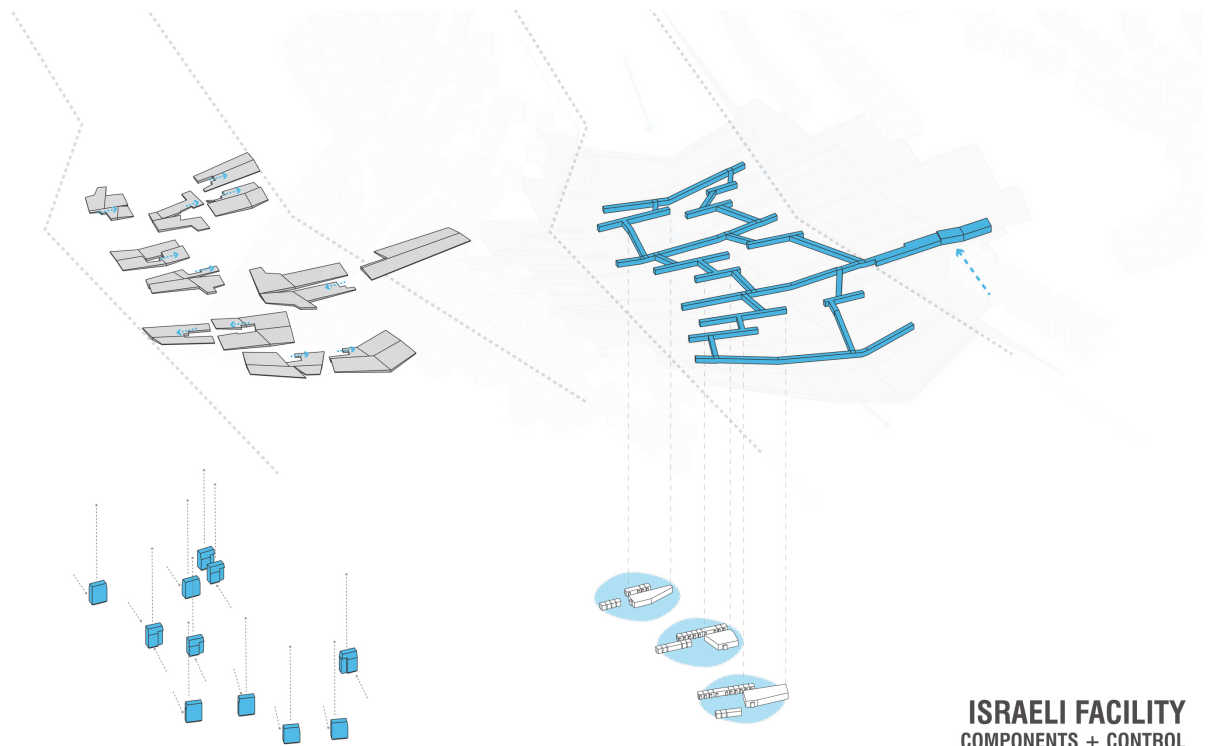


From each side of the seam a series of walkways snake out into the neutral zone. These walkways serve as a connecting tissue from the urban fabric on either side to the landforms within the seam. While the walkways offer connection from each side to the landforms they control, the two systems are separate and unconnected. They overlap and bypass each other but never intersect, offering near constant visual connection from one side to the other. A system of near connections. The walkways then connect to vertical stair/elevator tower elements below the landforms which allows access onto the artificial ground above.

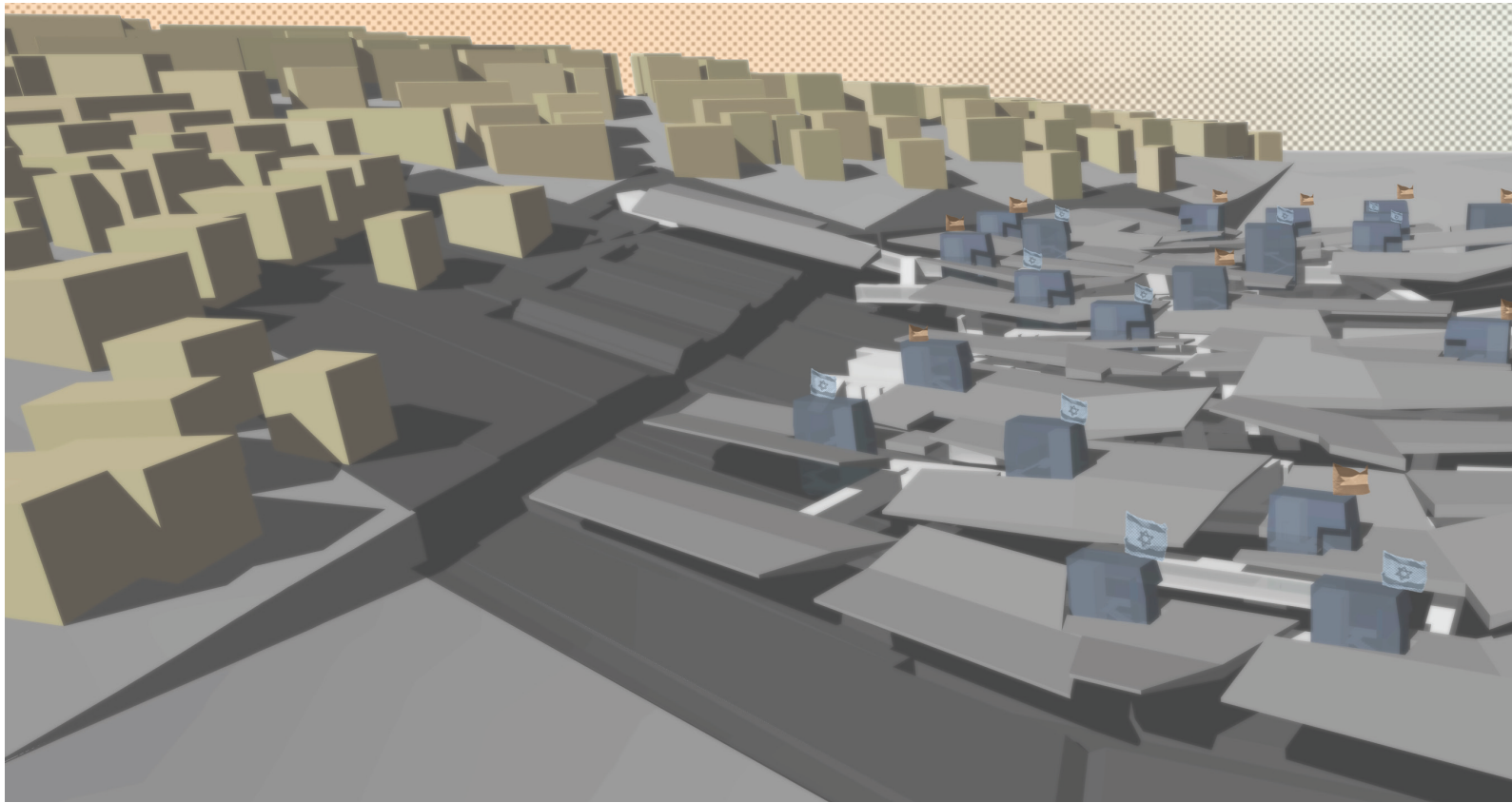
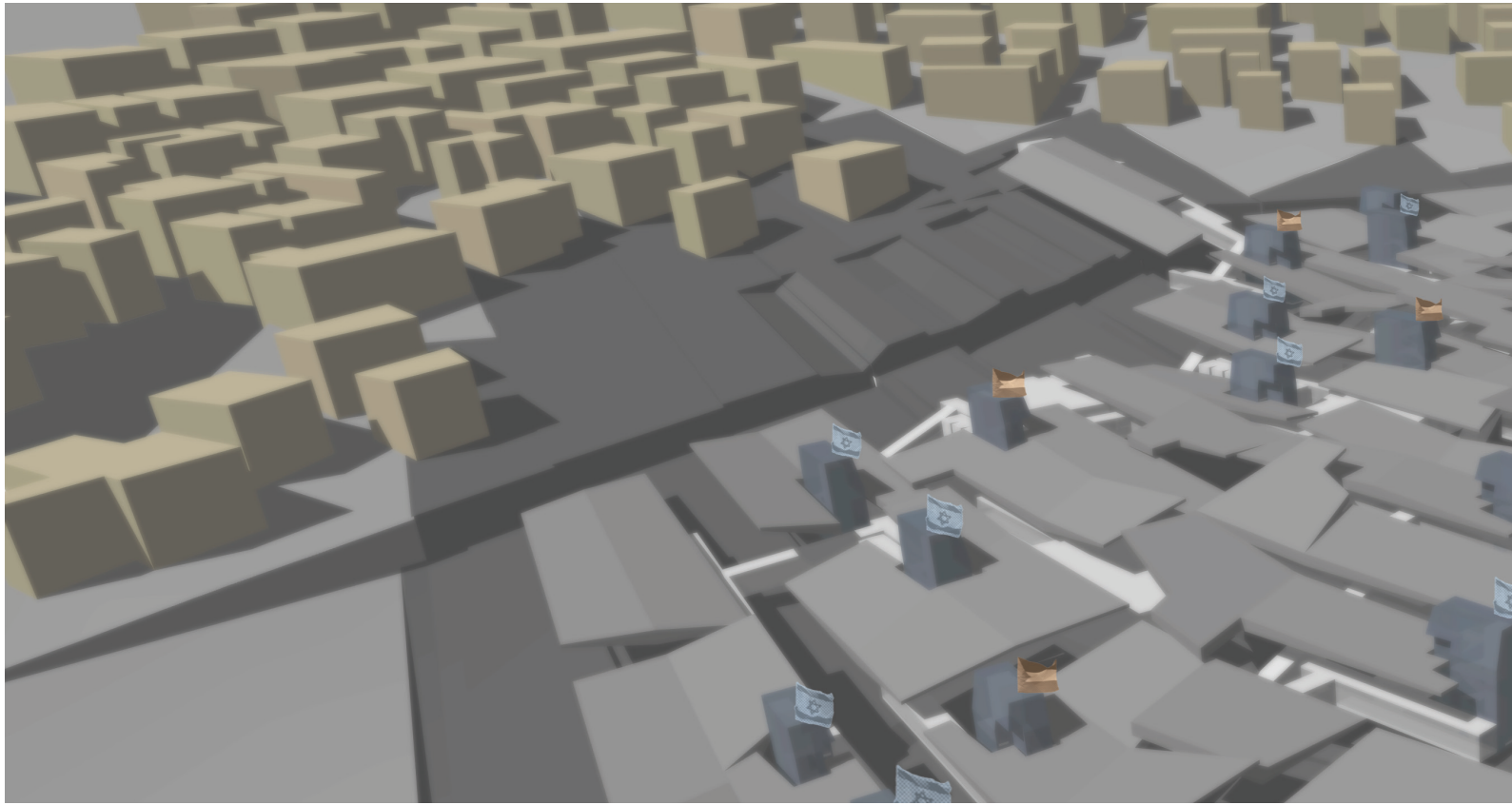
The dynamic nature of the overlapping facilities and social focus of the design lends itself well to a program type: that of diplomatic mission. A dual embassy within the seam where diplomats, state officials, security personnel, etc. are in constant observation and relation to each other, at once separate and connected. The program functions of the diplomatic mission; personal offices, conference rooms and large assembly halls, are clustered in sets and plug onto the walkway system of each side below the artificial surface. The program system is expandable and can adapt to changed intensity or altered program use.

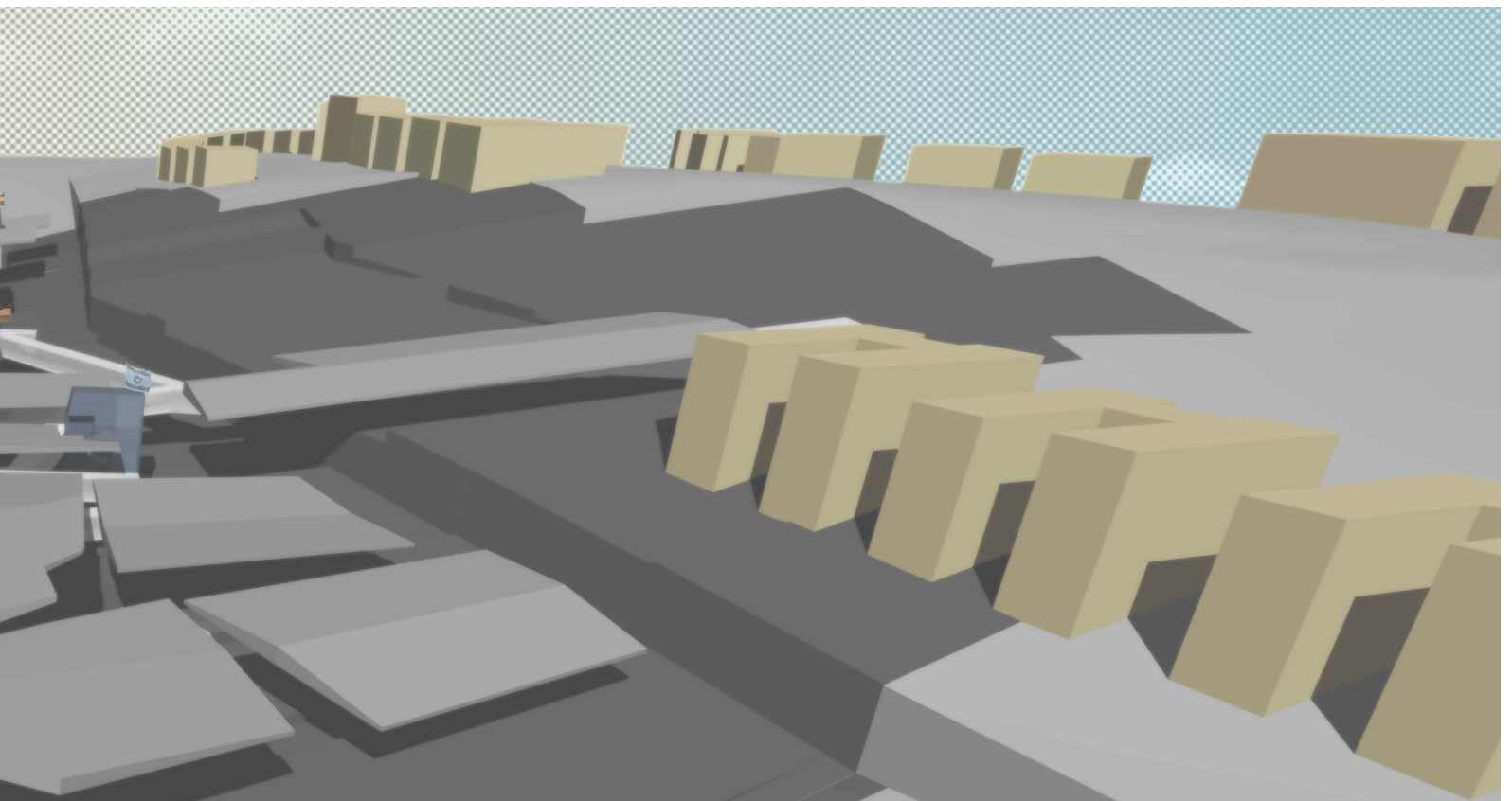


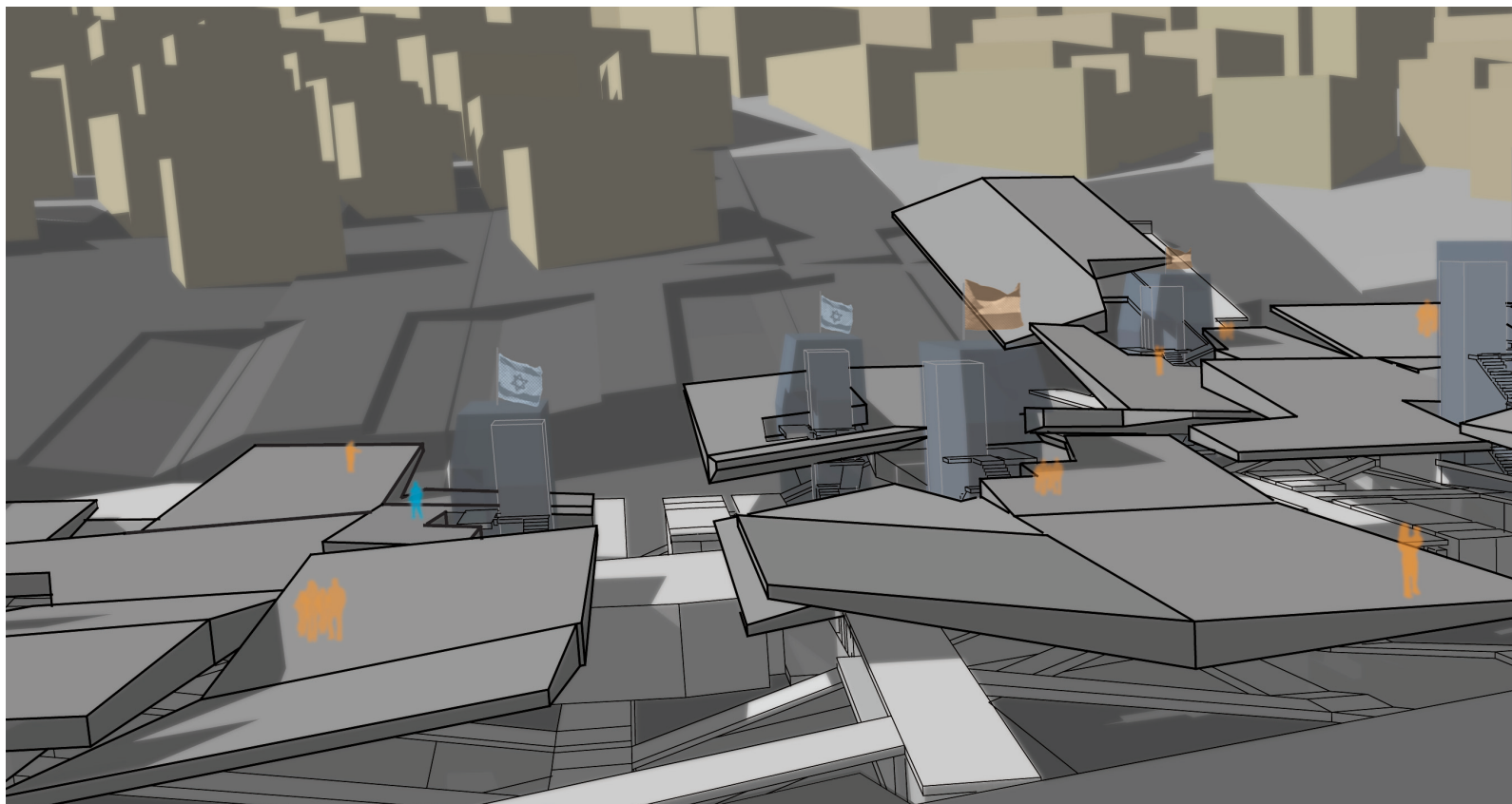
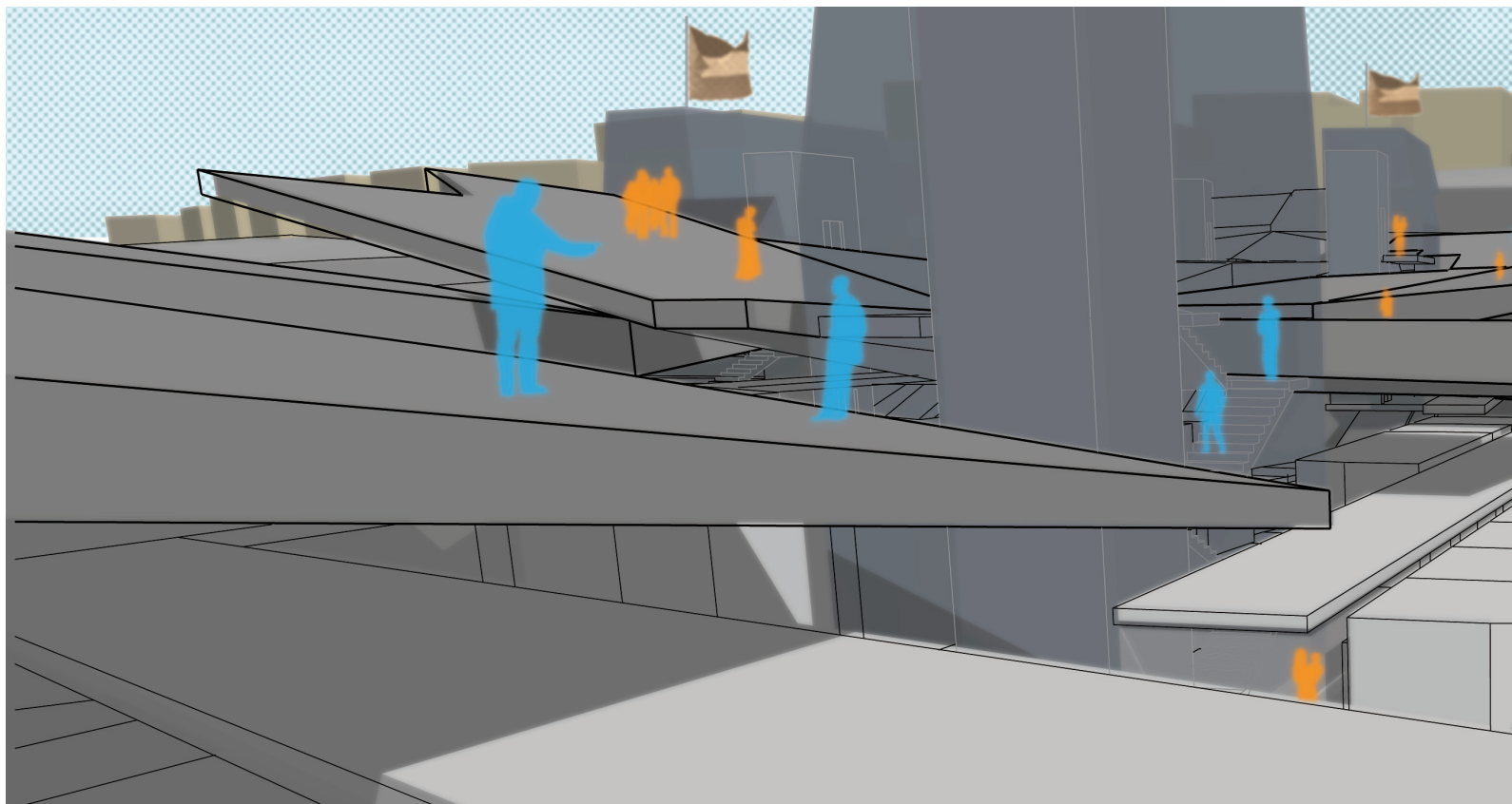
PALESTINIAN FACILITY
COMPONENTS + CONTROL

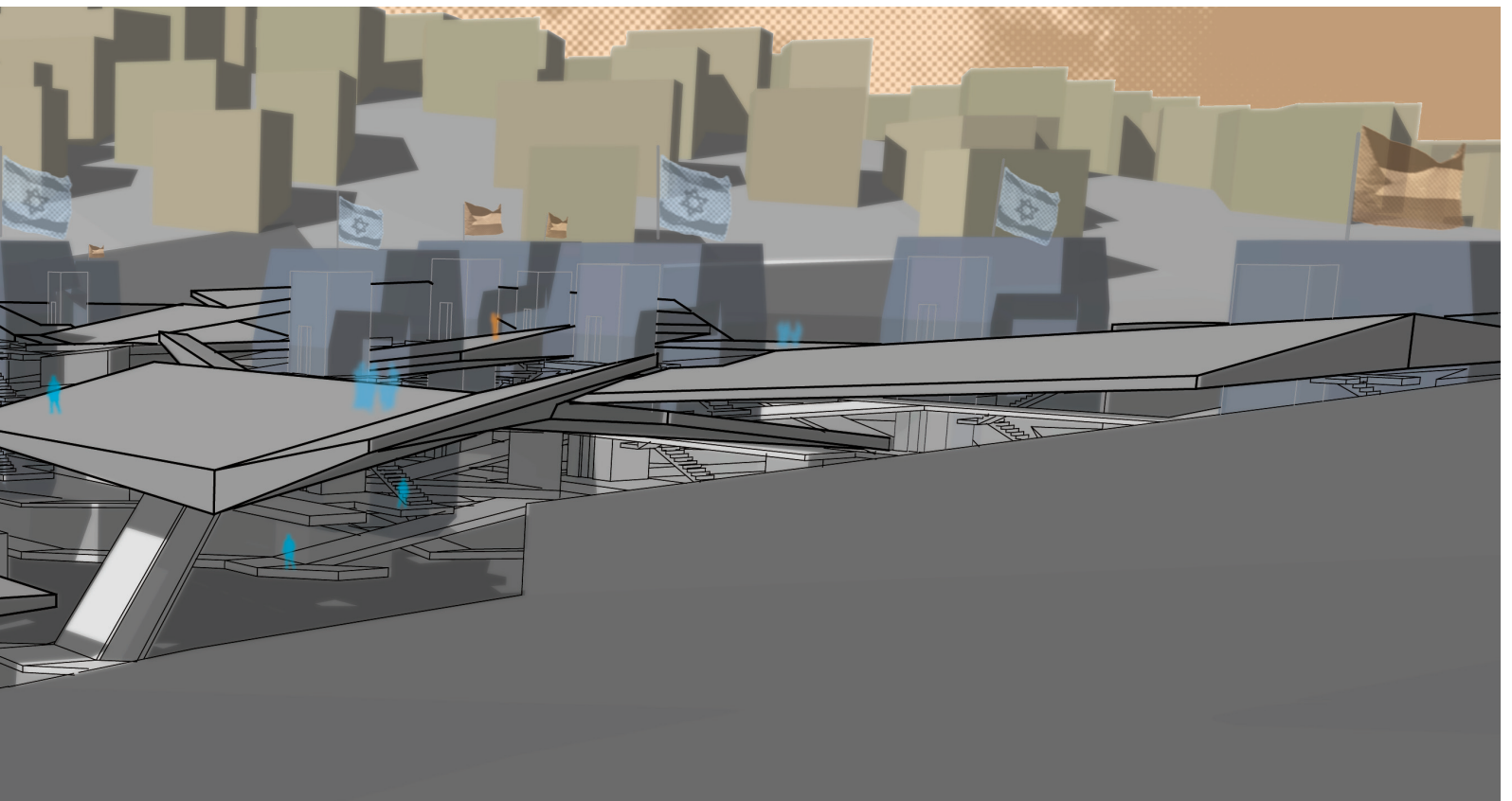
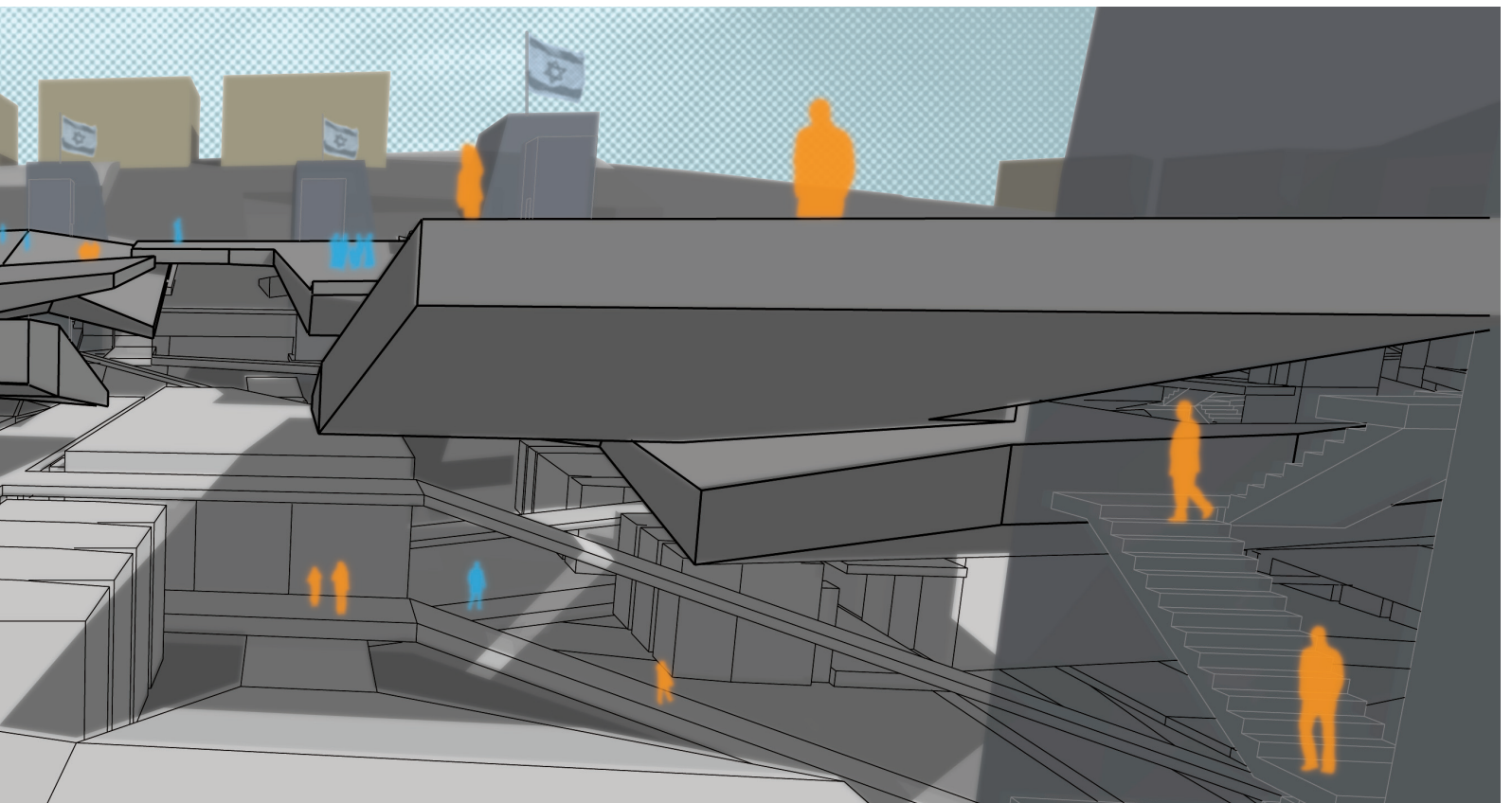


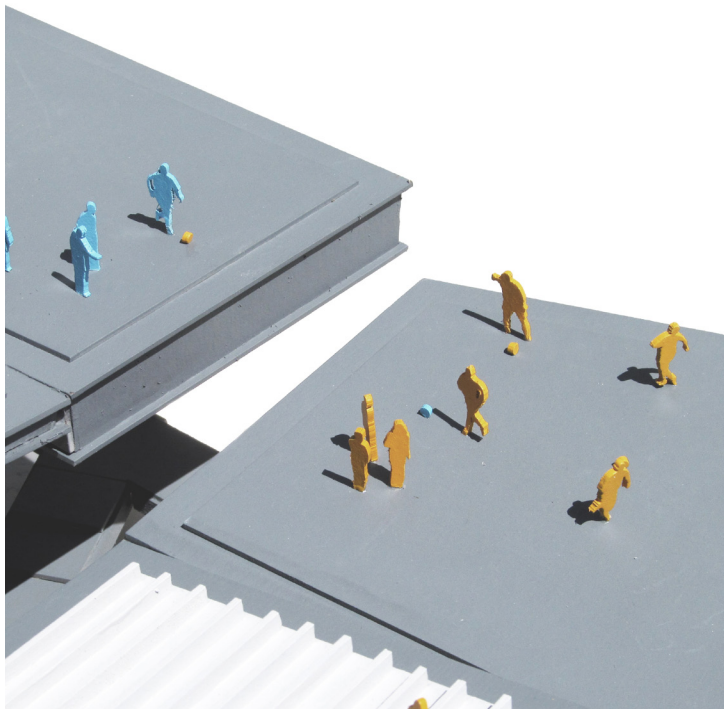
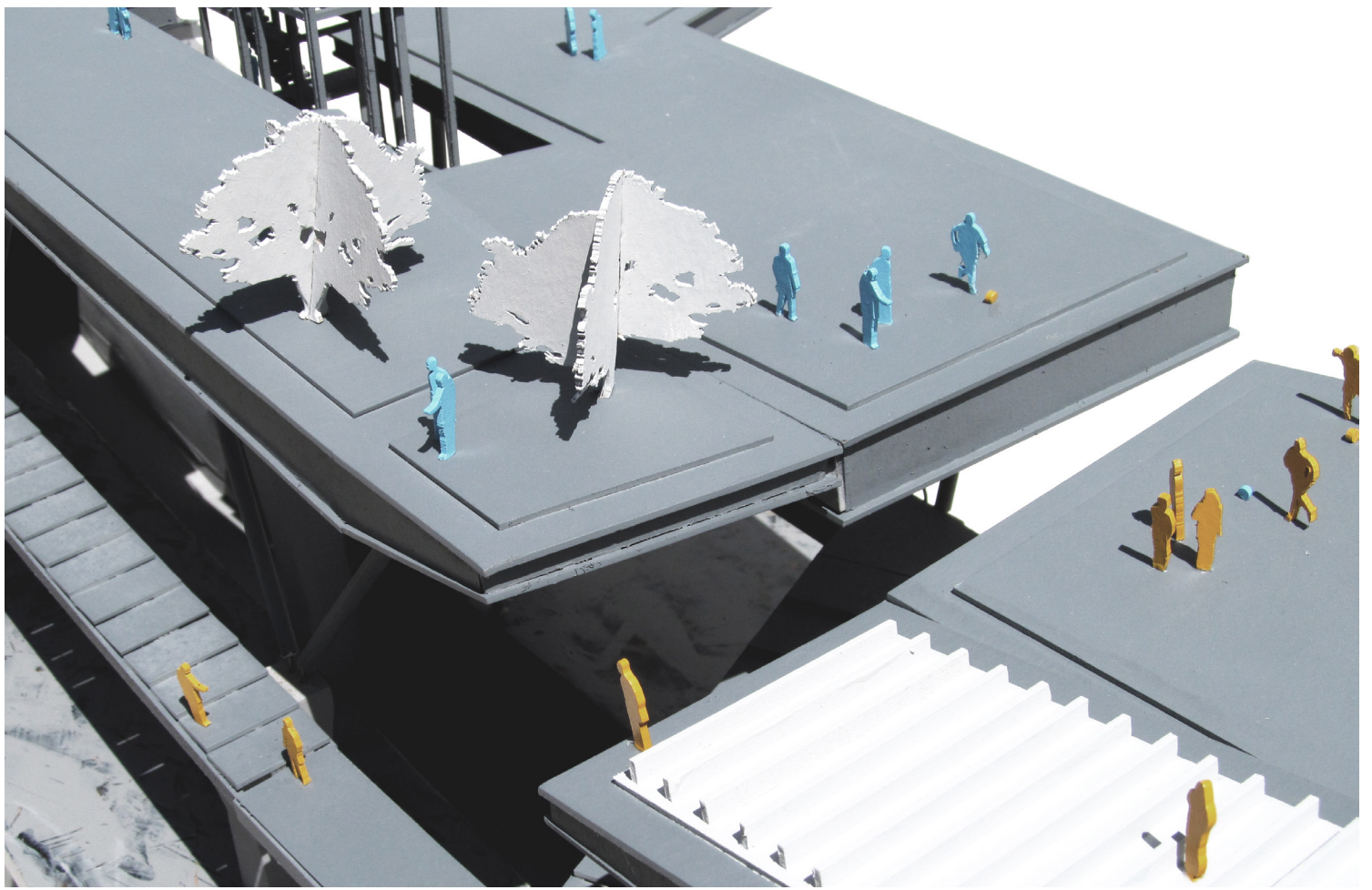
ISRAELI FACILITY
COMPONENTS + CONTROL

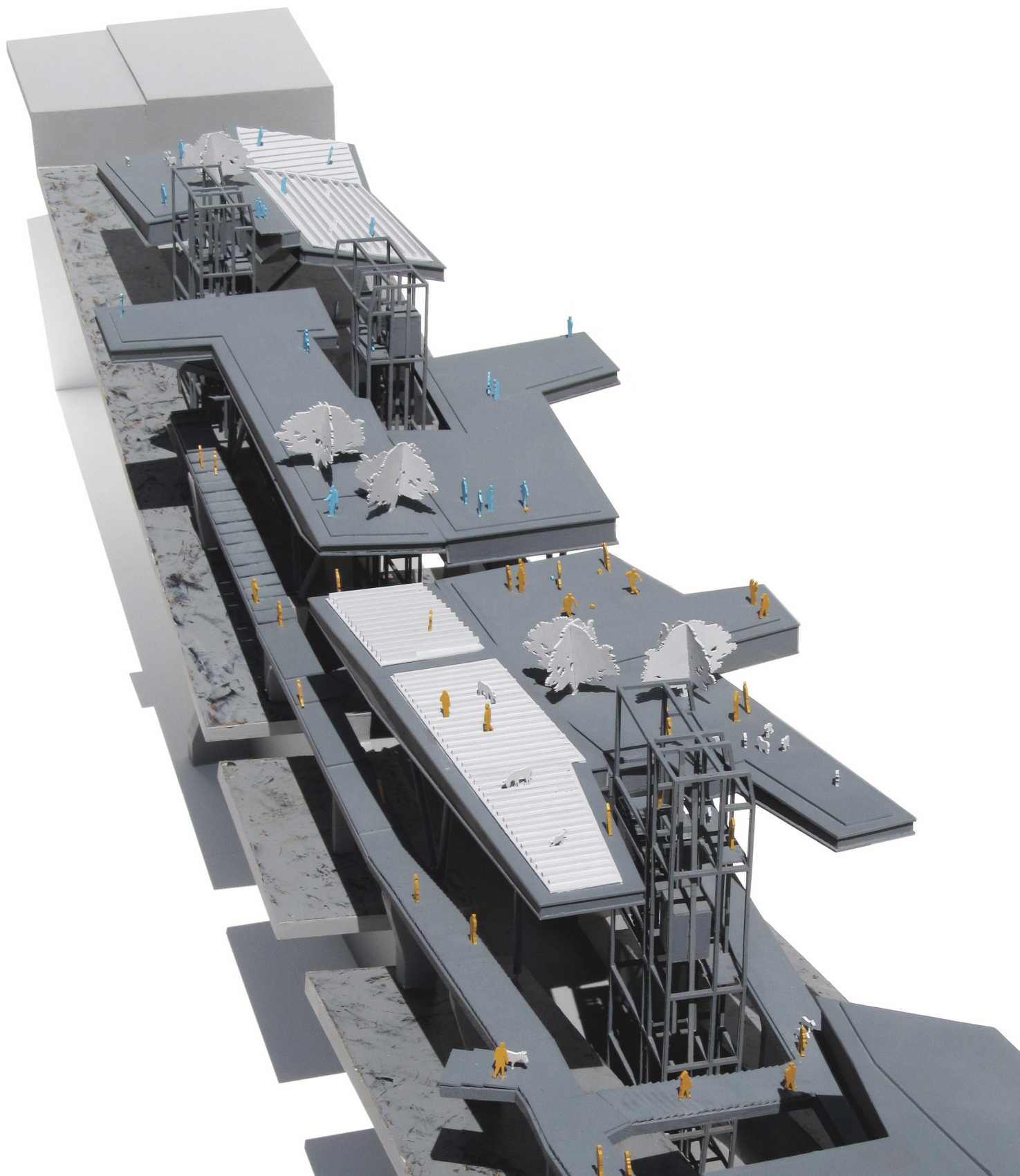


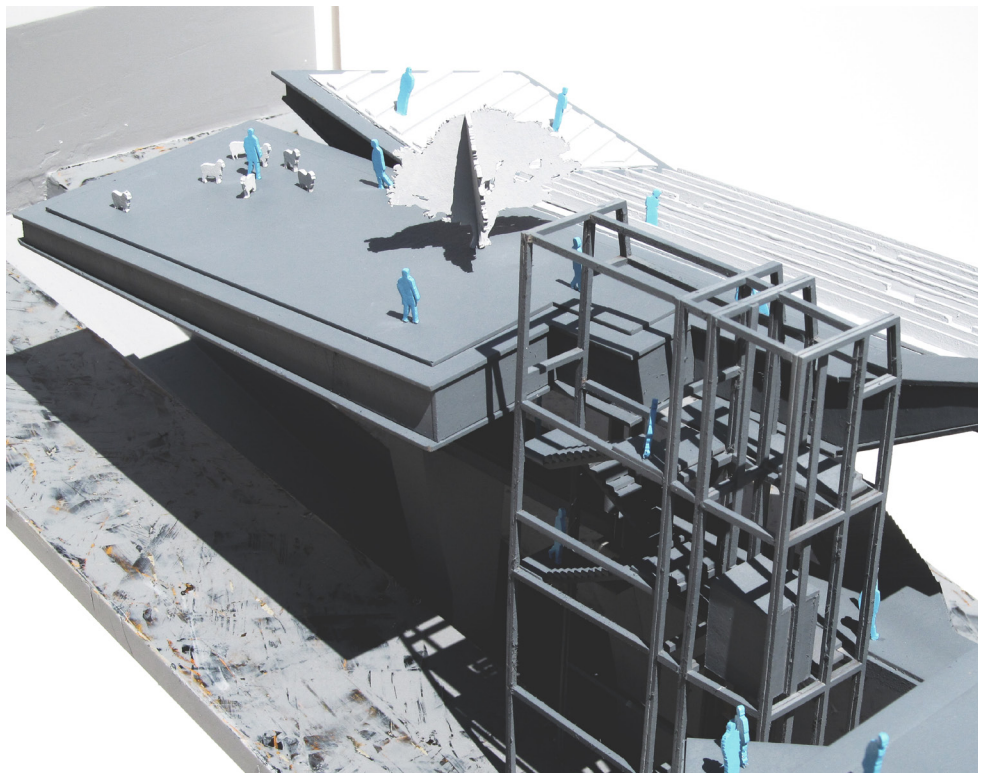
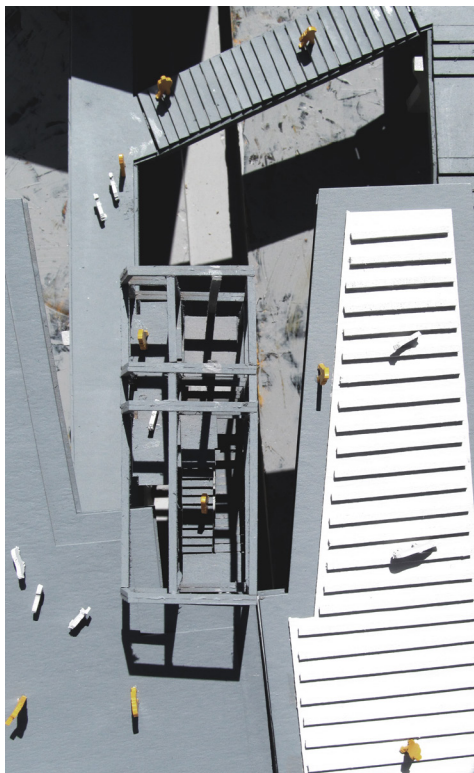
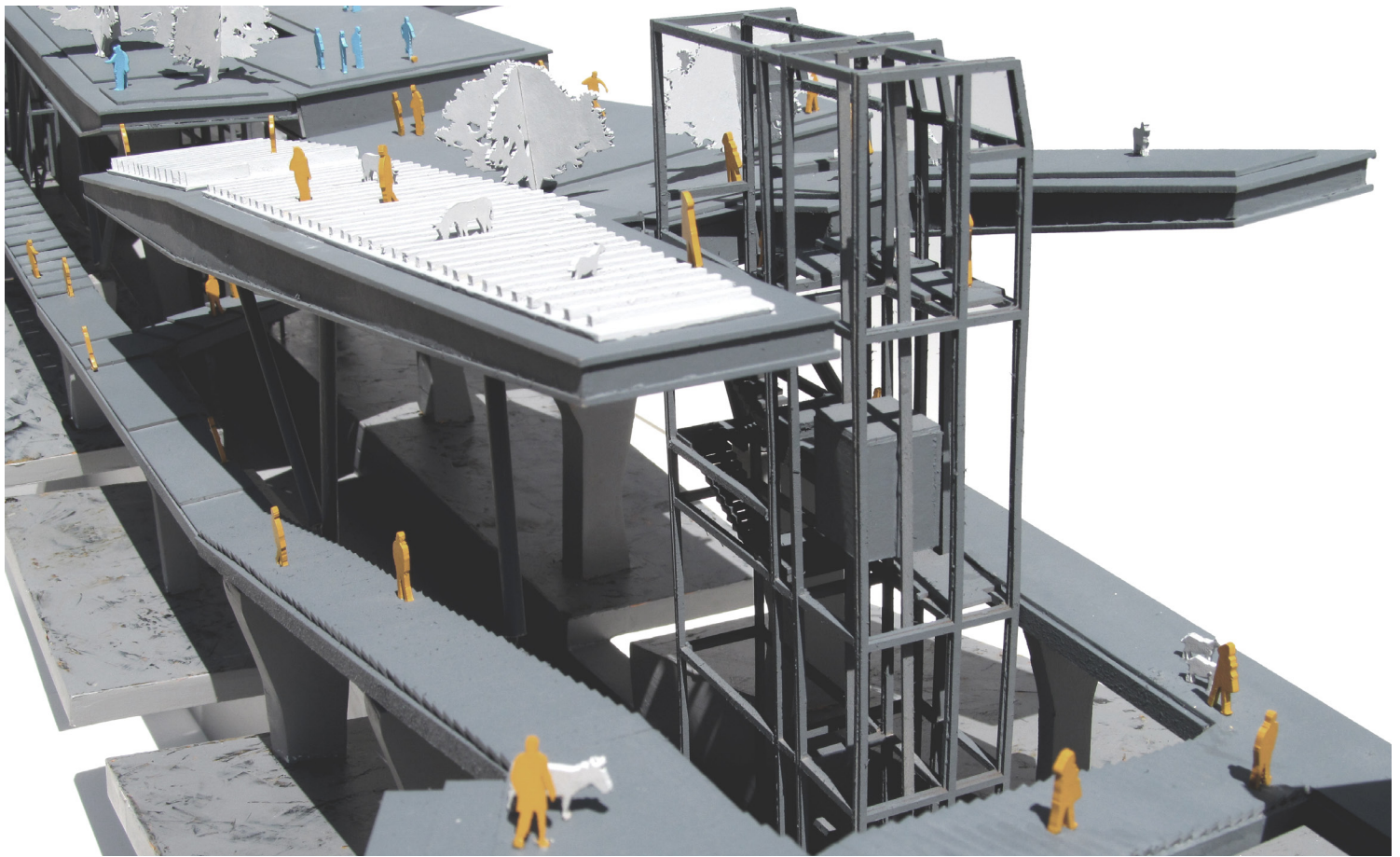




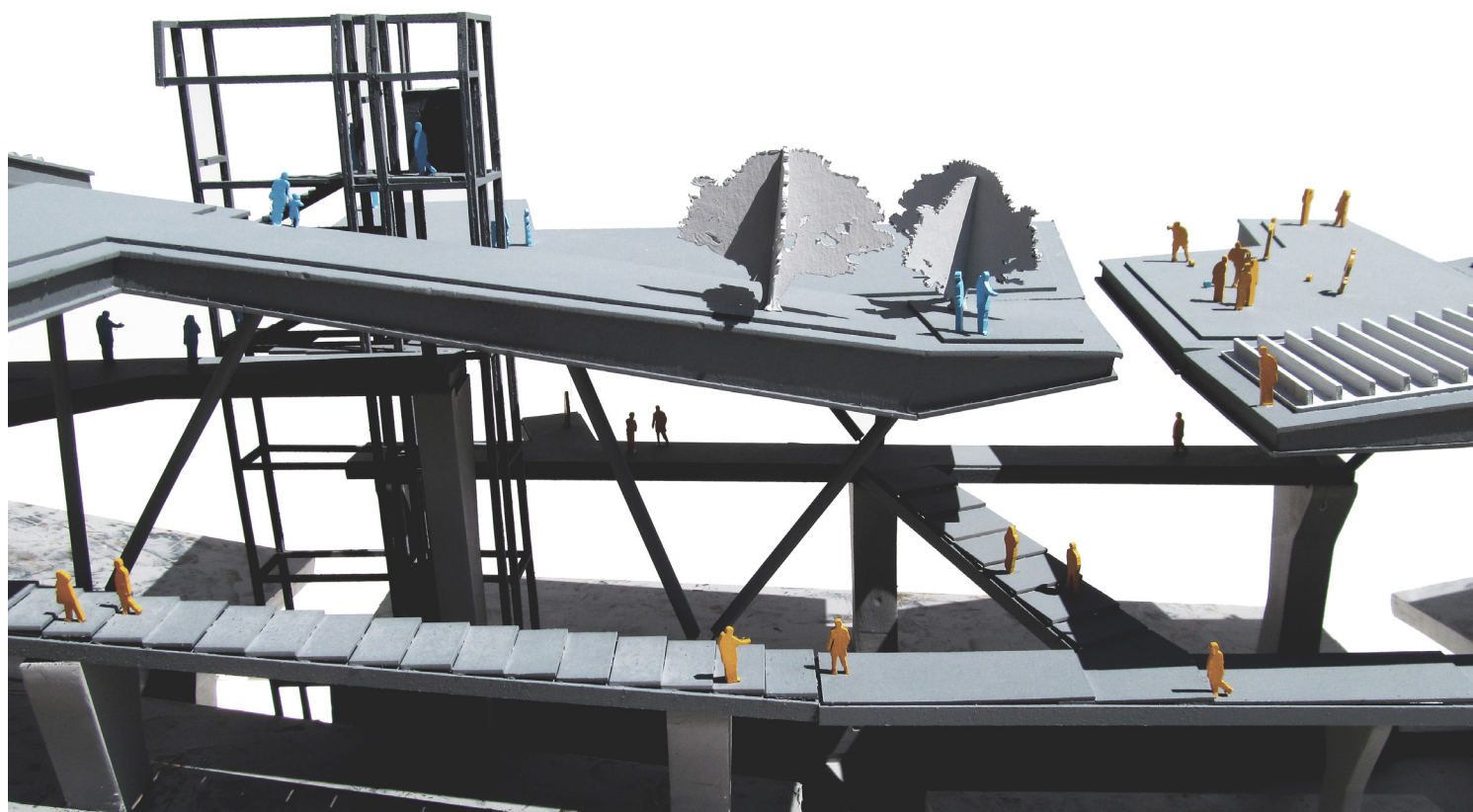






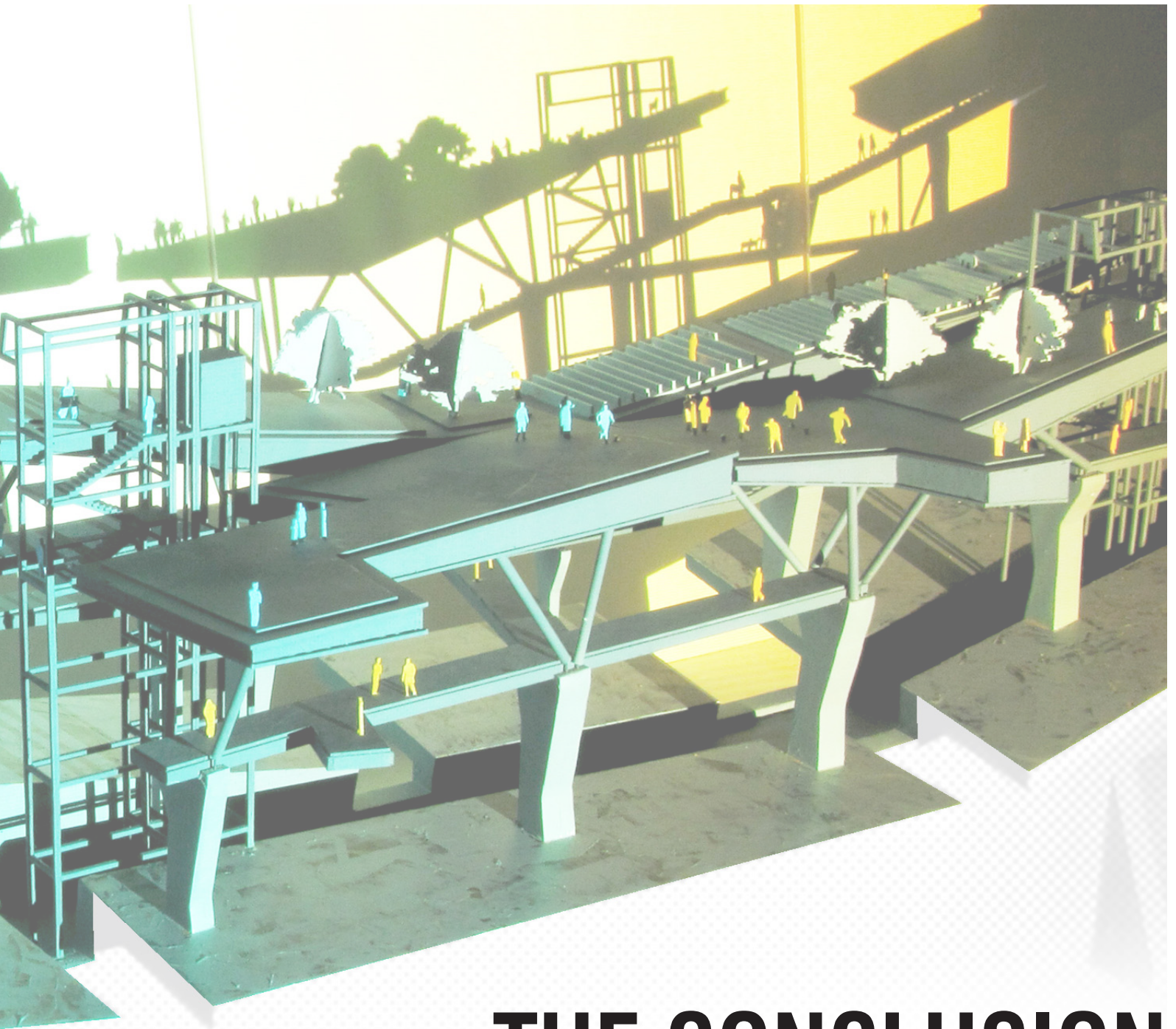




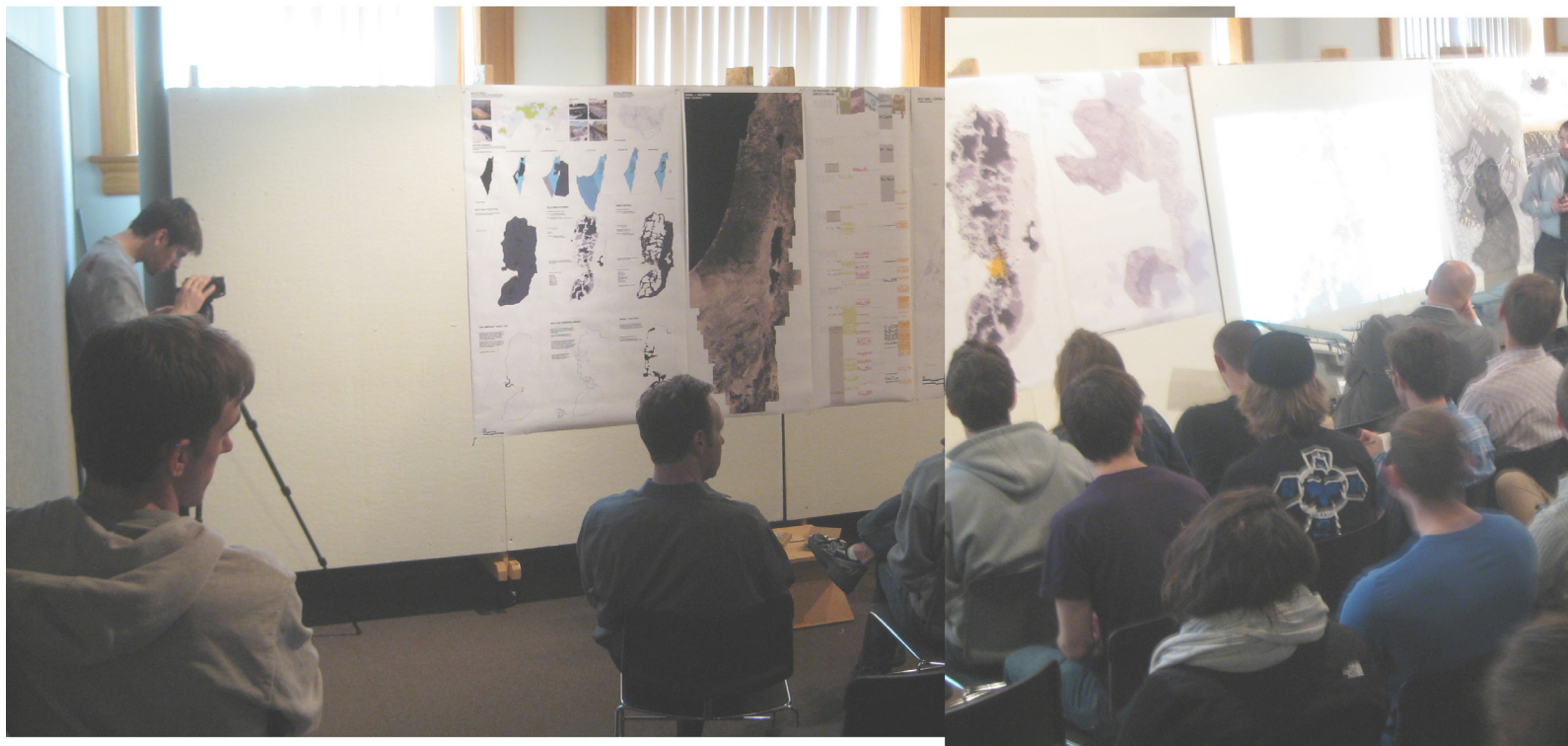








THE CONCLUSION



The final design project put forward represented an effort to explore a blend between an abstract narrative concept and a developed architectural proposal. In this sense I believe I have been successful. My project become a "design of a concept rather than a design of a solution," to quote one of my reviewers. The proposed project opened even more questions than it sought to resolve, but in the context of this conflict, that should not be considered a bad thing. There are programmatic concerns which require more investigation, but for me this project is not about a specific program but rather about the interaction which the architecture facilitates.

Proposing a conceptual project is a difficult endeavor, as my research revealed to me. Finding the balance between challenging status quo and remaining relevant is a fine and tricky line. This is a project that for me, as a designer, has only just begun and is something I will continue to investigate moving forward in my career.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks for:

_my thesis mentor Brian Kelly

_the students and faculty of the architecture and engineering department at An-Najah University in Nablus, Palestine for their assistance and support in the researching of my thesis topic

Yazan Arafat

Mohammad Dwaikat

Akram Dweikat

Ruba Na'el

Wadee Suleiman

Ehab Zawati

Thank you also to:

_my parents and family

_my thesibling, Kate Hier

_the model-fab crew:

Andru Meiners

Joe Wallace

Steven Timko

Jordan Lake

Elizabeth Hawks

Holden Rasmussen

_everyone else who has helped me along my academic path

